

# STORY PLAYS OLD AND NEW

BOOK TWO



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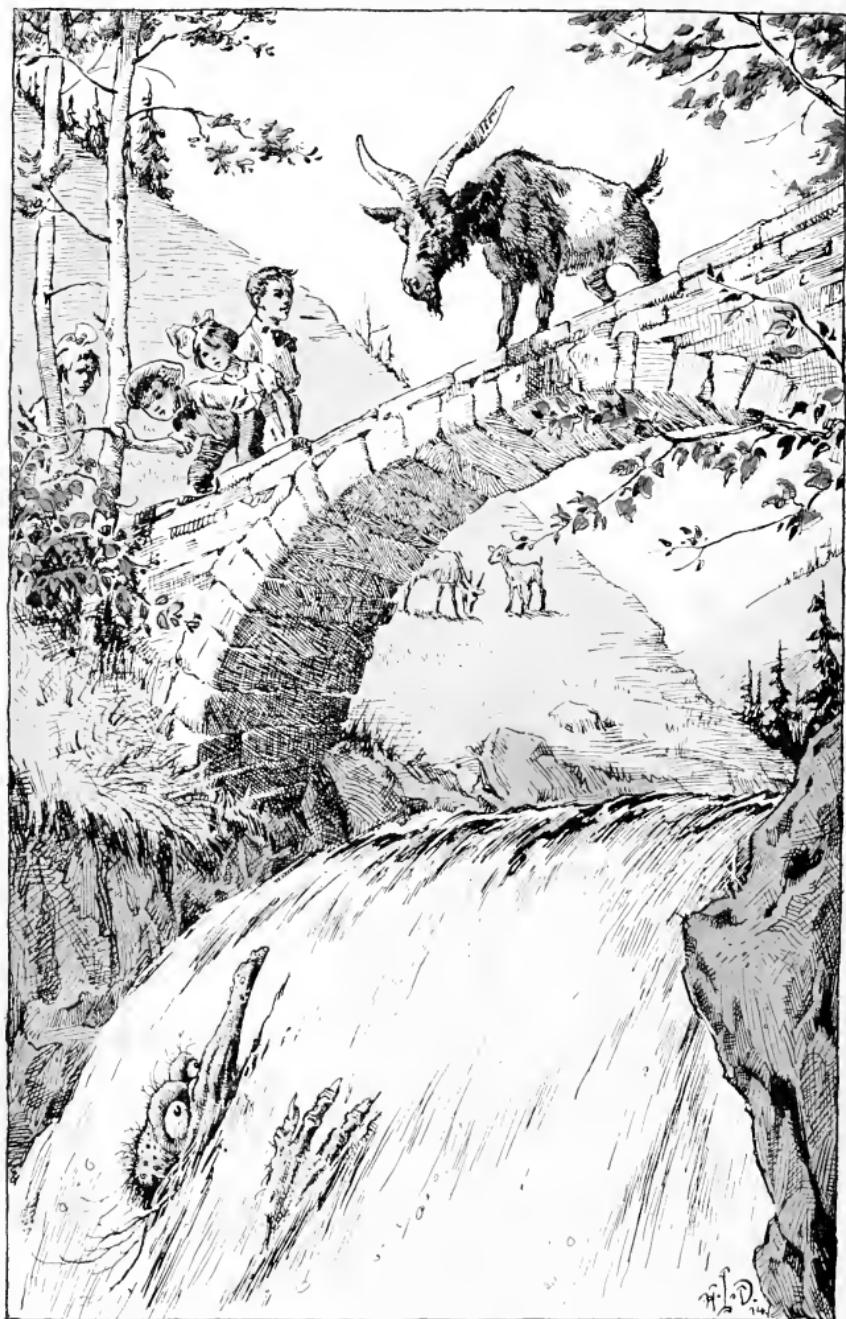
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THE THREE GOATS NAMED BRUSE

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# STORY PLAYS OLD AND NEW

## BOOK TWO

BY

ALICE SUMNER VARNEY

FORMERLY TEACHER IN NEWTON (MASS.) PUBLIC SCHOOLS



AMERICAN BOOK COMPANY

NEW YORK

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VARNEY'S STORY PLAYS, BOOK TWO.

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## THE UNFINISHED LESSON

TIME: *Morning.*

PLACE: *At the edge of a wood bordering a meadow.*

MAGPIE.      THRUSH.      BLACKBIRD.      OWL.      SPARROW.  
ROBIN.      STARLING.      WOODPECKER.      CRANE.      DOVE.

*Thrush* Come, all of you, and see what Magpie is doing.

*Robin* Oh, I know what she is doing, she's making a nest.

*Sparrow* Yes, of course she is.

*Owl* I wish the sun were not so bright; I would like to see exactly what she is about.

*Starling* Stand over here by me.

*Owl* There's just as much sunshine where you are.

*Crane* Stand in the shadow I make, then you may be able to see better.

*Owl* I can see a little. Thank you!

*Woodpecker* I don't think much of that for a nest.

*Magpie* How would you make a nest?

*Woodpecker* I would first cut a hole in the trunk of a tree. Then I would hollow a place out inside. That's what I'm going to do as soon as I can find a tree that suits me.

*Thrush* I see just how you do it, Magpie. All one needs to make a nest is some mud. I know a place in the meadow where that is to be found. I am going to it right away. My nest will be ready very soon.

*Magpie* Thrush! Thrush! Dear me, she doesn't hear me. A nest made of mud may satisfy her; it wouldn't me.

*Sparrow* Is mud all she will use to make her nest?

*Magpie* Oh, she may line it with dried grass or a few dead leaves.

*Sparrow* How funny. I should want a better nest than that.

*Magpie* If you watch me, you will see how to make a better nest. A nest that will be good enough for any bird. When you have made the mud into a nice round cake, then lay some slender twigs across it, so.

*Blackbird* I declare, that is a fine nest, and

not hard to make. I will find my mate right away and tell her all about it.

*Magpie* Did Blackbird go?

*Starling* Yes.

*Magpie* That is too bad; I am not half through with the lesson.

*Starling* I thought not.

*Magpie* After laying on the slender twigs, and placing some around the cake of mud, you put on more mud.

*Owl* Who—who would ask for a better nest than that? I am quite satisfied with what I have learned about nest building. Good day, friends. I am rather sleepy; I will go home. Mud, twigs, and mud,—that is all I have to remember. Oh, Mrs. Owl and I will have a nest to be proud of!

*Magpie* What was Owl saying about a nest to be proud of?

*Dore* He thought a nest of mud, twigs, and mud would please him and Mrs. Owl.

*Magpie* If they are pleased, all right. But that sort of a nest would not satisfy me. Would it satisfy you birds?

*Several Birds* No, it would not.

*Magpie* Listen, and watch me at the same time. The mud placed on the twigs you will beat into shape as I am doing. Now wind some more twigs loosely around the outside.

*Sparrow* That just suits me. I will set about building a nest like it at once.

*Magpie* Sparrow! Sparrow! What did you say you were going to do, build a nest like this?

*Sparrow* Yes, just like it.

*Magpie* But I have not finished. The nest is far from complete.

*Sparrow* It suits me, Magpie. Rather rustic and simple, but I like those things. Anybody who wants something better can have it.

*Crane* I favor rustic simplicity myself. I don't know that I shall build my nest of anything but twigs and sticks. I shall use strong sticks.

*Robin* Mud seems to me a very good thing to build nests of, but I should use straw in place of twigs. And I shall line my nest with feathers, just as Magpie is doing now, or anything soft and warm.

*Starling* To my way of thinking straw and



feathers are the things to make a nest of. I don't know that I shall bother to use mud and twigs.

*Magpie* If you want a strong nest use mud and twigs when you start it.

*Starling* Oh, bother the mud and twigs. Mud is dirty stuff, and twigs are sharp and hurt if you happen to run against them. No, I shall use nothing but straw and feathers.

*Magpie* Very well, if that satisfies you, use straw and feathers. Who is left to hear the lesson? Only you, Dove?

*Dove* Take two! Take two!

*Magpie* What do you mean?

*Dove* Take two!

*Magpie* Have you any idea of what it is you are talking about? You are certainly not paying attention to me. You are looking in every other direction. Now you are looking into the forest as if you wanted to fly there.

*Dove* Take two! Take two!

*Magpie* You don't do any such thing. You take one, one at a time, as you see me doing now. One: you wind it in and out like —

*Dove* Take two! Take two!

*Magpie* Take — Oh, what's the use of attempting to teach people who won't pay attention long enough to try to learn ?

*Dove* Take two ! Take two !

*Magpie* Take yourself out of here. Go, I say ! There, now I am alone I will finish this. I won't try to teach anybody else how to build a nest as long as I live.

— *Adapted.*

## CROW IN BORROWED PLUMAGE

TIME: *Forenoon.*

PLACE: *A field adjoining the barnyard.*

CROW. GOBBLER. PEACOCK. ROOSTER. HEN.

GOOSE. DUCK. DOG.

*Hen* Do you see that vain fellow yonder ?

*Rooster* That strange creature coming this way whose plumage is more varied than that of any other fowl ?

*Hen* Yes, I mean him. What can he be ? Who is he ?

*Gobbler* At what are you looking ? Not at that strange sight ?

*Rooster* Yes, it is that very thing that has caused us to wonder.

*Gobbler* He carries himself quite like a bird, but —

*Hen* He's a bird.

*Goose* Oh, he can't be a bird ! See how his feathers stand out. And such a variety of plumage as he shows.

*Duck* I declare, he has some of my choicest feathers on his back.

*Goose* His breast is quite covered with feathers of mine.

*Hen* Those are feathers that I once wore which are now about his neck.

*Gobbler* And those are mine which he has tricked out his wings with.

*Peacock* Half the feathers in his tail belong to me.

*Rooster* And the other half to me.

*Goose* From what we can see all his plumage is borrowed.

*Gobbler* Yes, and without our leave.

*Peacock* See the fellow strut !

*Duck* He was never born to be a strutter any more than I was.

*Rooster* If he knew what a funny show he makes of himself he would run away and hide.



*Hen* He won't do that. You can see by his walk, and the way he holds his head, he won't.

*Duck* No; he is one to keep himself in the eyes of others as long as any one is around to see.

*Peacock* What conceit he has. It is clear to me pride was not a gift at birth.

*Goose* Do you like his walk?

*Duck* He ambles; a thing that displeases me very much.

*Rooster* The way he carries himself amuses me. One moment his head is quite erect, the next it is out like the neck of a horse pulling at a heavy load.

*Goose* The fellow is altogether ridiculous.

*Peacock* He is indeed.

*Hen* Why should we tolerate such a piece of laughing stock?

*Rooster* We won't. If he comes this way again, we will set upon him and drive him far from here.

*Duck* A capital idea. And I mean to get my feathers back.

*Peacock* Who'd have thought of doing that? I will take mine from him too.

*Rooster* I will do the same.

*Hen* He shall give me back my plumes, the saucy, impudent fellow !

*Gobbler* And he shall not wear mine any longer.

*Goose* I will see if his breast is as white as my feathers make it appear.

*Hen* See, he has turned about !

*Peacock* He hasn't decided which way to take.

*Rooster* He is coming toward us again.

*Duck* I am having all I can do to keep from laughing, he is such a comical sight.

*Goose* We must make this serious business. At least we must make it serious for him.

*Gobbler* We will, never fear.

*Rooster* All ready, friends, he is close at hand.

*Crow* (*Strutting and flapping his wings.*)  
*Caw ! Caw ! Caw !*

*Peacock* Is he challenging us ?

*Duck* I think he is singing.

*Crow* Caw ! Caw, caw ! Caw, caw, caw !

*Goose* That singing ? Preserve me from ever hearing any more like it.

*Rooster* Now, friends, set upon the vain fellow. Let each one claim his own, and do not spare him. Here comes the dog to help us.

*Dog* Bow-wow-wow ! Bow-wow-wow !

*Goose* Hsssss ! Hsssss !

*Peacock* Hiiiii ! Hiiiii !

*Duck* Quack, quack, quack, quack !

*Gobbler* Gobble, gobble, gobble ! Gobble, gobble !

*Hen* Cut, cut, cut, cut, cut, cut !

*Rooster* Cock-a-doodle-do ! Cock-a-doodle-do !

*Crow* Caw, caw, caw ! Caw ! Caw !  
Caaa-. Ca — ca — caw ! Oh ! Oh ! Am I alive ? I'm sure I don't know, I have been pulled and pounded so. It is hard to move. I — I wonder — yes, I can stand. But I am so dizzy ; everything is going round. Am I really standing still ?

*Rooster* Do you see who it is ?

*Hen* It can't be possible. Yes, it is, the old black crow from the pine woods.

*Goose* That ragged fellow ?

*Hen* Yes.

*Gobbler* This served him right.

*Peacock* We won't see him in borrowed plumage again soon.

*The Others* (*The Crow limps away by himself.*) He will have no more from us.

*Crow* After this I pray I may be content with what is mine alone. If rags are all borrowed plumes cover, how much worse the reality becomes when we are stripped of what is not our own.

—ÆSOP (*Adapted*).

## THE STORKS

TIME: *Forenoon.*

PLACE: *A Street and housetop.*

FATHER STORK. MOTHER STORK. THREE YOUNG STORKS.

PETER. JAN. HANS. JACOB. WILLIAM.

*Father Stork* It must look very grand for my wife to have me standing here on the roof guarding our nest.

*Mother Stork* What are you saying, Father Stork? You were saying something.

*Father Stork* I must have been thinking aloud.

*Mother Stork* Didn't you say you thought you looked very grand standing there on guard?

*Father Stork* I believe I did say something of the sort.

*Mother Stork* Do you know the children are hungry ?

*Father Stork* What, so soon again ? Well, I will fetch them some frogs from the marsh.

*Mother Stork* Don't be long away ?

*Father Stork* No, I'll be back in just a little while.

*First Young Stork* (*He has just waked up.*) Where is father going ?

*Mother Stork* To the marsh for frogs.

*First Young Stork* Good ! I like frogs, especially young ones.

*Two Young Storks* So do we like young frogs.

*Second Young Stork* I hope father will get lots of them.

*Third Young Stork* Mother ! Mother ! Look down in the street !

*Mother Stork* At those boys ?

*The Young Storks* Are they boys ?

*Mother Stork* Yes.

*The Young Storks* We don't like them, mother.

*Mother Stork* You needn't be afraid of those boys, they won't hurt you.

*The Young Storks* Do you hear them ?

*Mother Stork* Yes, they are singing.

*Boys*

“Stork, stork, fly away ;  
Stand not on one leg to-day.  
Thy dear wife sits in the nest,  
With the little ones at rest.

“There’s a halter kept for one,  
There’s a stake awaits another ;  
For the third we have a gun,  
And a spit to hold his brother.”

*First Young Stork* Mother, did you hear what  
the boys said ? We are to be hung !

*Second Young Stork* And shot.

*Third Young Stork* And put upon a spit.

*The Young Storks* We are afraid.

*Mother Stork* Don’t be afraid, the boys won’t  
hurt you.

*The Young Storks* But we are afraid. We are  
going to hide.

*Jan* Ha ! Ha ! Ha ! We frightened  
the baby storks.

*Hans* Yes. How quickly they hid when  
they heard us sing.

*Jacob* The mother bird didn't hide.

*William* We'll sing again and frighten her. Come, Peter, sing with us this time.

*Peter* No, I will not sing that song. It is not right to frighten the little storks. They never harm you.

*Jan* Oh, it's fun to see them hide. Come, never mind what Peter says, we can sing without him.

“Stork, stork, fly away,  
Stand not on one leg to-day.  
Thy dear wife sits on the nest,  
With the little ones at rest.”

*Peter* Do you see, the mother stork does not fear you. She is telling the little storks so. I believe she is going to teach them to fly.

*Mother Stork* Now, children, I want your attention. Those boys can do you no harm. While your father is gone to the marsh I want you to try to learn how to fly. Soon the summer will be over, then we must fly away, for it will be cold here; there will be ice and snow, and no green leaves on the trees. The

marsh will be frozen over so that we cannot catch any frogs.

*First Young Stork* Oh, I shouldn't like that !

*Second Young Stork* Will the bad boys who sang about shooting and hanging us be frozen too ?

*Mother Stork* No, but they will be very cold sometimes and wish for summer to come again. But where we are going it will be summer.

*Third Young Stork* Will it, Mother ? And where are we going ?

*Mother Stork* To a land called Egypt. There you will see strange three-cornered houses, one of which almost touches the clouds. Pyramids is what these strange houses are called. Then there is a great river which runs through the land, and every year it overflows its banks and turns the country into a mire.

*First Young Stork* Are there lots of frogs in the mire ?

*Mother Stork* Yes, lots of them.

*The Young Storks* Oh, how nice !

*Mother Stork* Yes, very nice. You can eat all day long.

*Second Young Stork* And it will be cold here?

*Mother Stork* Yes, it will be so cold here that those pretty little clouds you see in the sky now will be frozen. Sometimes they will fall down here in little white feathers, very shiny and very pretty. Men call these feathers snowflakes.

*Third Little Stork* Will there be so many of these feathers that they will cover bad boys and kill them?

*Mother Stork* No, the snowflakes won't kill the boys. They like to see them come. When the snowflakes cover the hill then the boys have great fun sliding. But watch me now as I fly, and then you must try to fly like me.

*The Little Storks* Oh, mother, we can never do that!

*Mother Stork* You can if you try. If you don't learn to fly you can't go to the land where the pyramids are and feast on the frogs left in the mire the great river makes.

*Hans* Ho! Ho! That stork almost fell. He has gone back to the nest and won't try to fly again.

*Peter* His mother has told him to come out. He couldn't go to Egypt if he didn't learn to fly.

*William* Is that where the storks go?

*Peter* Yes. There, he did better that time.

*Jacob* The other two are flying very well.

*Jan* How quickly they learn.

*William* It certainly did not take these birds long to learn to fly.

*Peter* Here comes the father bird. See the young birds hurry back to the nest.

*Hans* He has frogs for them. Ho, boys! Sing again.

*Peter* You cannot frighten the storks, they do not mind you at all now.

*Father Stork* (*The young storks have all been fed.*) So, children, you are learning to fly?

*The Young Storks* Yes, father.

*Second Young Stork* We are going to fly away to Egypt, a land where there are strange three-cornered houses.

*First Young Stork* And a great river that is full of frogs.

*Third Young Stork* And it is warm there all the time.

*Father Stork* I see, your mother has told you many things while I was gone to the marsh. Well, you must fly every day now. I want you to fly the best of all the storks about here. If you do, the captain of the storks will give you a prize. Will you try to win the prize for flying the best?

*The Young Storks* Yes, father, we will try. We want the captain of the storks to give us the prize.

— HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN (*Adapted*).

## THE SPARROW AND HER FOUR YOUNG

TIME: *Forenoon of an autumn day.*

PLACE: *A field of wheat stubble.*

MOTHER SPARROW. FOUR YOUNG SPARROWS. SECOND MOTHER SPARROW. SEVERAL OTHER SPARROWS.

*Second Mother Sparrow* (*Comes into field of wheat stubble with First Mother Sparrow. Here, already, are several other sparrows eating.*) You say you put your four babies into a swallow's nest, and that some wicked boys came and pulled it down?

*First Mother Sparrow* Yes. In another day I should have taught them to fly.

*Second Mother* What do you think became of them ?

*First Mother* I cannot tell you, only that the boys did not kill them or their dead bodies would have been lying with the nest.

*Second Mother* Yes, surely. But I am very sorry for you. I taught my children to fly and informed them as a sparrow should be informed before going out into the world. Why are you staring so at those four young sparrows ? They are fine looking fellows. I should be pleased to claim them as my children.

*First Mother* I am going to speak to them.

*Second Mother* Why, do you think —

*First Mother* Yes, I think they are my own lost children. Do you not know me ?

*First Sparrow* Who can it be ?

*Second Sparrow* I —

*Third Sparrow* We —

*Fourth Sparrow* Is it not —

*The Four Sparrows* It is our mother !

*First Mother* Ah ! My children, my children ! How my heart has cried out for

you. I did not think that I should ever see you again.

*The Four Sparrows* We are glad to be with you once more, mother.

*Second Mother* Truly I am glad of what has happened. You will have much to say to one another. I am going to pick up some grain. Your sons are what I called them, fine-looking fellows. You are sure to find other good qualities in them.

*First Mother* Thank you for speaking so well of my children. Now, my sons, I want to talk with you.

*Four Sparrows* Yes, mother.

*First Mother* You can never know the anxiety you have caused me all through the summer by taking wing in the way you did. There are so many perils little birds have to meet. How shall they know what to do if their mother has not taught them? You, my oldest son, tell me what you have been doing this summer and how you have existed.

*First Sparrow* I lived in the gardens on caterpillars and worms till the cherries were ripe.

*First Mother* Oh, my son, there is much

danger in that sort of thing. You must be careful, especially when people promenade the gardens with long green poles which are hollow inside and have a hole at the top.

*First Sparrow* Yes, mother, but suppose the holes have little green leaves stuck over them with wax, what then?

*First Mother* Where did you see such a thing?

*First Sparrow* In a merchant's garden, mother.

*First Mother* Oh, my son, merchants are shrewd people. If you have been among such people of the world as merchants, you must have learned worldly wisdom. Make use of it and don't be overconfident.

*First Sparrow* I shall remember what you have said, mother.

*Second Mother* (*To Sparrows eating about her.*) Yes, they have just found one another. She has been searching everywhere.

*A Sparrow* How very singular that they should meet here to-day.

*Several Sparrows* Yes, very.

*First Mother* Now, my son, where and how have you lived?

*Second Sparrow* I lived at the king's court.

*First Mother* Sparrows and silly little birds are not at home in such places. What were you able to make of gold, and velvets, and silks? Keep to the stable yard, and when there is threshing going on you can get your daily share of corn.

*Second Sparrow* Yes, mother, but when the grooms and stableboys put traps in the straw or shoot at us, many a bird is wounded or beheaded.

*First Mother* How do you know that?

*Second Sparrow* I have seen it with my own eyes among the grooms and yard boys.

*First Mother* Oh, my dear son, yard boys are bad boys! If you have really been to the king's court, and associated with these and grooms, and have left no feathers behind you, then you are certainly able to look after yourself. But all the same, be wary; the most knowing dogs have often been devoured by wolves.

*Second Sparrow* I have heard of that happening. I will not forget what you have told us, mother.

*First Mother* Come here, you, my third son. Where did you go to find a living?

*Third Sparrow* On the high roads and lanes, where I have picked up corn and grain from the carts.

*First Mother* Very good food and wholesome. But keep your weather eye open, and remember when you see a wagoner stoop to pick up a stone it means mischief.

*Third Sparrow* Yes, but suppose one of them carried a stone hidden in his breast pocket?

*First Mother* Where did you find that out?

*Third Sparrow* I have remarked that the mountain folk, before they drive their wagons out, generally take big stones with them.

*First Mother* These mountain folk are clever people. If you have mixed with them, you must know a few things. Nevertheless, fly away and be cautious. Mountain rascals have often worked the ruin of a sparrow with the aid of stone or brickbat.

*Third Sparrow* Thank you, mother, for your advice. I will cherish it.

*Second Mother* Shall we draw closer and hear what she is saying?

*Several Sparrows* Yes we have had quite enough to eat for now.

*First Mother* You, my dear baby nestling, always the silliest and weakest of my brood, stay with me.

*Second Mother* She is giving that youngster good advice.

*Several Sparrows* Oh, very !

*First Mother* The world is full of larger and coarser birds, with hooked beaks and long claws, whose only employment it is to pounce on the little and the weak, and swallow them. So stay here and clear the little caterpillars from the trees, and the house spiders, and you will be happy and contented.

*Fourth Sparrow* Oh, my mother, who lives an honest life and doesn't interfere with others, no vulture, eagle or hawk will harm.

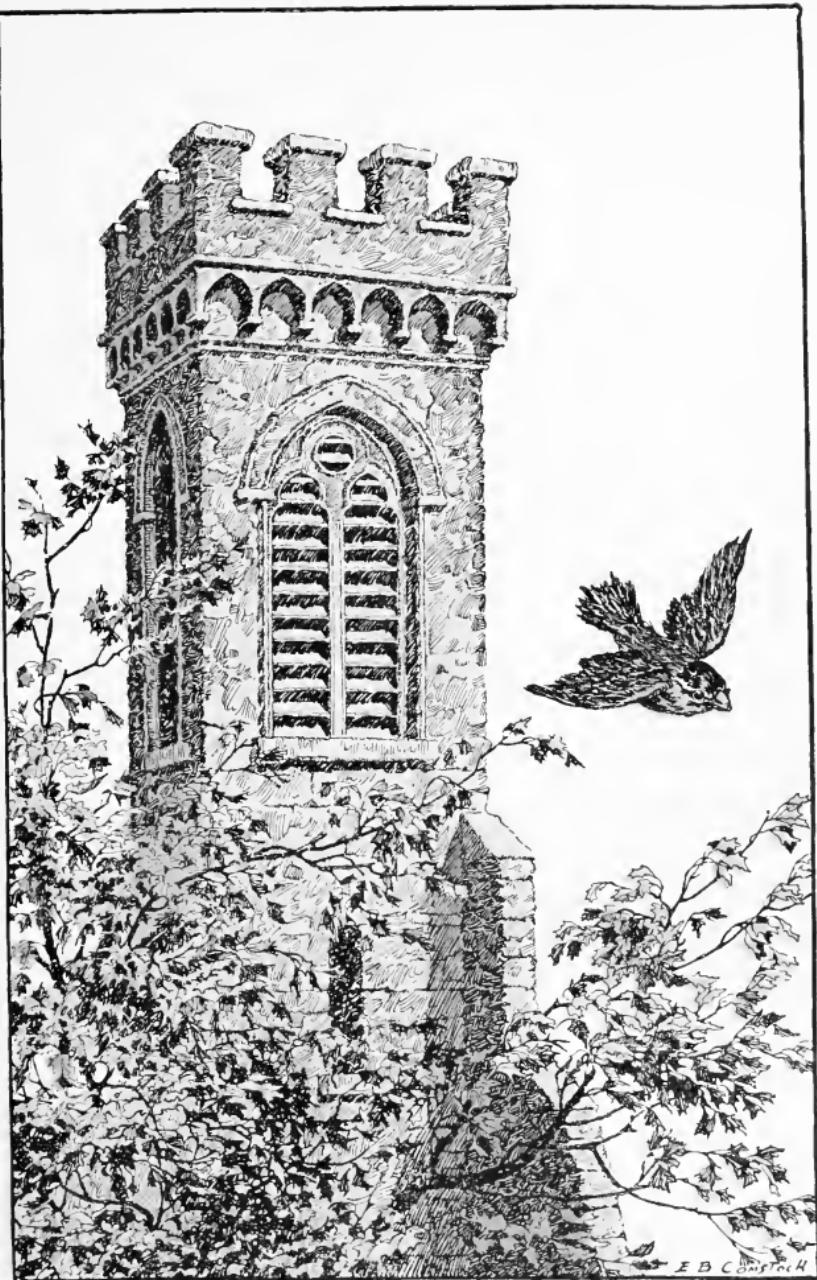
*Second Mother* How truly he speaks.

*Several Sparrows* Yes.

*Fourth Sparrow* He has only to pray thankfully morning and night for sustenance to the dear God who is the creator and maintainer of all the birds of the forest.

*Second Mother* How beautifully he talks.

*Fourth Sparrow* He hears the prayer of even



the young ravens, and knows the fall of every sparrow.

*First Mother* Where have you learned all this?

*Second Mother* Where, I wonder?

*Several Sparrows* It will be interesting to know.

*Fourth Sparrow* A great hurricane bore me away; it took me to a church. There I spent the summer in keeping the windows free of spiders and bluebottles, and heard the preacher preach what I have told you. So the Father of all sparrows fed and guarded me from misfortune of every sort.

*First Mother* Ah, my dear little son, the knowledge you have acquired is the most valuable.

*Second Mother* She is quite right.

*First Mother* I will trust you to go to churches in the future. Keep the windows clear of spiders and bluebottles, and pipe like the young ravens your praises to the everlasting Creator. So you will keep well and safe, even if the whole world were full of nothing but the fiercest wild birds.

*Fourth Sparrow* I shall keep your advice always in memory, mother.

*Second Mother* You are happy, and you deserve to be.

*First Mother* Thank you, good friend.

*Other Sparrows* We are glad you found your children.

— JACOB AND WILLIAM GRIMM (*Adapted*).

## THE HARE AND THE TORTOISE

TIME: *Morning.*

PLACE: *A field with a tree in sight.*

THREE BOYS. Two GIRLS. HARE. TORTOISE.

FOX. ROBIN. BLUEBIRD.

*Hare* (*Comes into the field accompanied by Fox and Tortoise.*) Is it a bargain, Tortoise, will you race with me?

*Tortoise* Yes.

*Fox* How dare you say you will do this thing? The Hare is one of the swiftest runners.

*Robin* (*Who has just come along with Bluebird.*) He is indeed.

*Bluebird* I have often watched him and wondered at his swiftness, for he has no wings. There are few of the wood folk who can keep up with him.

*Tortoise* I am ready to make the bargain.  
I will race you, Sir Hare.

*Hare* Very good. What shall the distance be?

*Tortoise* To yonder lone tree.

*Robin* The Hare will go there twice, yes, three times, while you go once.

*Tortoise* Mind you, I make no boast. I shall run the race fairly and do my best.

*Hare* I shall be as fair as you. Who is to act as judge?

*Tortoise* Why not the Fox?

*Hare* I agree to the Fox.

*Fox* Very well. Are you ready?

*Hare and Tortoise* Yes.

*Fox* Then be off. Ha! Ha! Ha!  
What a race; the Hare has gone nearly half the distance already.

*Robin* It is as I said it would be, Hare will beat the Tortoise three times over.

*Bluebird* Cousin, do you see what Hare is doing?

*Robin* I see he has stopped running and is looking back.

*Bluebird* But why is he going into that clump

of tall grass? Can you see what he is about in there?

*Robin* Not yet. Now I see. Well, what does the fellow mean by doing that?

*Bluebird* What has he done?

*Robin* Stretched himself out to go to sleep.

*Bluebird* Did you ever!

*Fox* He has plenty of time for a nap; I think I will take one too.

*(Goes aside and lies down.)*

*Robin* Tortoise has it all his own way. I wonder where he is? Oh! I see him. He keeps jogging on.

*Bluebird* He is a remarkably persistent fellow.

*Robin* I think so now myself.

*Bluebird* Shall you watch the race to the end?

*Robin* Yes.

*Bluebird* So shall I. Sir Hare may have cause to regret his napping.

*First Boy* (*He appears running in company with two other boys and three girls.*) You saw them start? You are sure they were running a race?

*First Little Girl* I thought so. The Hare and Tortoise stood side by side and the Fox stood near them. At something the Fox said the Hare and Tortoise started to run.

*Third Boy* You don't mean the Tortoise ran?

*First Little Girl* He did not go as fast as the Hare, of course, but he was traveling as fast as a Tortoise can, and he didn't look about him at all.

*Second Boy* You say they came by this path?

*First Little Girl* Yes.

*Second Little Girl* I saw them too. Where can they be now, do you suppose?

*First Boy* Well, we aren't likely to find the Hare, but we may see the Tortoise somewhere along the way.

*First Little Girl* What is that thing moving there? It is quite a distance ahead.

*Second Little Girl* I see it. It is not far from that big tree.

*Third Boy* It must be the Tortoise.

*Second Boy* Do you suppose that tree is the goal?

*First Boy* If it is, the Hare has won the race.

*Second Little Girl* Why don't we go to the Tortoise?

*Third Boy* Come, we will go.

*Robin* Suppose we go over to the lone tree. If I am not mistaken, Hare has overslept and is going to be beaten.

*Bluebird* You are right, cousin, I do believe.

*(Robin and Bluebird go to lone tree.)*

*Second Boy* (*Stops suddenly by the clump of tall grass.*) Don't make any noise! What do you see?

*First Little Girl* It's the very Hare that started to race with the Tortoise.

*Second Little Girl* Yes, I know it is, his ears are so very long.

*First Boy* The race is lost for him if he doesn't wake up soon.

*Third Boy* Let's wake him.

*The Others* Yes; then we can see if he was really running a race.

*Third Boy* Oh, Hare! Hare! Are you racing with Tortoise? Better wake up if you are. The swiftest is not always the one to reach the goal first.



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*(Hare springs up and runs toward the lone tree.)*

*First Boy* See the Hare go!

*Second Boy* He surely was running with Tortoise.

*Fox* (Wakes up suddenly.) Hare must be running again by the sounds I hear. I must get to the lone tree in time to decide the race.

*First Little Girl* What was that ran past us through the grass?

*Second Little Girl* The Fox we saw with Hare and Tortoise.

*First Boy* Let us hurry to the lone tree so as to see who the winner of the race is.

*Second Boy* We had better go around this way. If the animals saw us, they might take fright.

*(Three Boys and the two Girls go out.)*

*Fox* (Stops suddenly beside the lone tree.) You have just your length to go, Tortoise, and the race is yours. No, Sir Hare, you have arrived too late.

*Hare* If I hadn't overslept, Tortoise wouldn't have won.

*Tortoise* I had nothing to do with your sleep-

ing. But I know that one who sleeps by the way is not likely to come to the end of his journey in time.

*Robin* I declare the Tortoise is a fellow of wisdom.

*Bluebird* I think all he is doing is applying common sense to everyday affairs.

— *ÆSOP (Adapted).*

## ADVENTURES OF A COUNTRY MOUSE

### I

TIME: *Afternoon.*

PLACE: *On the great barn floor.*

COUNTRY MOUSE. CITY MOUSE. ROOSTER. HENS.

*Country Mouse* I like to look out of this great barn into the farmer's orchard and across his broad fields. It is certainly the best place in the world.

*Rooster* (Comes strutting into view.) What were you saying just now, friend Mouse?

*Country Mouse* That this is the best place in all the world.

*Rooster* You are quite right, my friend, quite right. The farmer's corn is always good. In fact he never grows anything poor.

*Country Mouse* No, never.

*Rooster* By the way, who is that coming up the lane? He is of your kind. His clothes were never made in the country.

*Country Mouse* Why! Can it be? Yes, it is my friend, City Mouse. Ah, welcome! Welcome!

*City Mouse* I thought I would like to see how you are getting on. It has been a long time since we last met.

*Country Mouse* Yes, yes! Don't go, Rooster.

*Rooster* I cannot stop any longer. I am needed at home. Excuse me, won't you?

*Country Mouse* Certainly. Well, you are a good fellow to come so far to see me.

*City Mouse* That is all right, I was glad to come.

*Country Mouse* Sit down, won't you, and I will get something for us to eat. Here is an ear of very good corn. And these green peas are good too. Which will you have?

*City Mouse* I will try the corn, thank you.

*Country Mouse* This is extra good new cheese, and these red apples are the finest grown in the farmer's orchard.

*City Mouse* Everything is good, as you say. I have enjoyed the corn, the cheese is all right, and the red apples are certainly fine. But tell me, my friend, how can you live in the country? There is nothing here to see but orchards, fields, meadows, woods, rivers, and mountains. And how tiresome it must get listening to the birds sing. In the city there are so many, many things to see and hear.

(*Rooster returns and several hens are with him.*)

One lives in a beautiful house there, and you have so many good things for dinner every day that you can't possibly eat them all. Why, after living in the city a week you will have forgotten all about the country. Come home with me, my friend, and let me prove to you what a fine place the city is.

*Country Mouse* You make me think the city very grand by what you say about it.

*Rooster* Go along with your friend and see for yourself.



*The Hens* Go by all means. It must be nice there. We would like to visit the city.

*Rooster* You can't. But friend Mouse can. Now go along. You will be very happy.

## II

TIME: *Evening.*

PLACE: *Dining Room.*

CITY MOUSE. COUNTRY MOUSE. DOG. PUSS.

*City Mouse* Here we are. It is rather a long walk. Are you tired?

*Country Mouse* No indeed!

*City Mouse* But you are hungry?

*Country Mouse* I could eat something. What room is this?

*City Mouse* This is the dining room. The family has just finished dinner. Here is cake and fruit.

*Country Mouse* How very good. You are rich indeed, my friend.

*City Mouse* Why did you jump?

*Country Mouse* Hark!

(*Dog barks outside.*)

*City Mouse* It is the dog. He won't hurt us, but we will get out of his way. Follow me.

*Dog* (*He appears suddenly.*) There's that mouse again, and he has a friend with him. I will call Puss. They will surely come back. Oh, here you are, Puss ! Mouse has just been here. There is a friend with him, not very well dressed.

*Puss* Where did they go ?

*Dog* Under the sideboard. There is a way there to Mouse's home. You had better hide and watch for them. They are sure to come back.

*Puss* Yes, quite sure to. I will hide behind this screen.

*Dog* I will lie down behind this chair and pretend I am asleep.

*City Mouse* Come on. We are alone. I want you to try this squash pie.

*Country Mouse* It is the first pie I ever ate.

*City Mouse* Oh, we have pie here every day. Eat a lot of it.

*Dog* Now, Puss, is your chance. They are both too busy to think of you. Take that country fellow, he is so big and fat.

*Country Mouse* Oh ! Oh !

*City Mouse* What's the matter? What do you see? Oh! Oh!

*Dog* Too bad, Puss, to lose them both. No use to try again to-night. Better come along with me to the kitchen and get some supper.

(*The mice return.*)

*City Mouse* That cat never came so near catching me before. Let us finish our pie.

*Country Mouse* No, I thank you. I shall start for home at once. The city for you if you like it. The country for me.

*City Mouse* You have a perfect right to choose.

*Country Mouse* And I choose an ear of corn in safety, the birds to sing to me, to pie and cake eaten in fear of cats that lie in wait to kill. Good-by, my friend.

*City Mouse* Good-by; I would like to have you stay here.

— *Æsop's "Fables" (Adapted).*

## THE ANIMALS SICK OF THE PLAGUE

TIME: *About noonday.*

PLACE: *A grove.*

LION. FOX. WOLF. BEAR. TURTLE. BOAR. TIGER.  
PANTHER. ASS. TWO DOVES. ROBIN.

*Robin (He meets two doves coming along.)*  
Why have I seen no animals abroad to-day?

*First Dove* They are all sick with the plague.

*Robin* Oh, the plague! It does more harm in one day than any other disease.

*Second Dove* Yes. The Fox and Wolf are both so ill they do not watch to slay.

*First Dove* The savage Tiger is too sick to hunt, he would not repulse his worst foe. Should you stay here you must suffer with the rest.

*Robin* Are you going away?

*Second Dove* As fast as ever we can.

*First Dove* We do not care to die. To remain here means certain death. You are not going to stay?

*Robin* I may, a little while.

*Second Dove* Don't stay ! Don't stay ! You are sure to die.

*Robin* I am not afraid.

*First Dove* We are. Come, or the plague may get us.

(*The Doves go from sight quickly.*)

*Robin* It may get them, travel as fast as they will. It may get me. Here comes the Turtle, perhaps he is the bearer of news.

(*Turtle comes in.*)

What news, Turtle ?

*Turtle* Don't you know ? All the world is sick with the plague.

*Robin* I am not sick ; you are not sick.

*Turtle* All the animals are sick.

*Robin* Oh, that is quite a different matter, and all the world is not sick.

*Turtle* Of course all the world is not sick. But the strong Lion is robbed of his strength, the bear goes about as weak as a babe, and the panther and boar offer resistance to no one.

*Robin* I wonder greatly at all this.

*Turtle* Oh, the plague is a terrible thing.

*Robin* Yes, so I am beginning to find out. Is anything being done ?

*Turtle* The Lion has called a council to be held in this place. It is that that brings me here now. I wish to know what action is taken.

*Robin* The meeting is sure to be interesting.

*Turtle* It can't help but be when such a great matter is to be considered.

*Robin* I am going to post myself here by this tree and listen to what is said.

*Turtle* I shall stay near by. We shall hear much wise talk.

*Robin* No doubt of that. The animals are coming now. They are approaching from all directions. Can you hear the Lion?

*Turtle* (*Lion roars in a rather faint voice.*) I never heard his voice when it sounded like that.

*Robin* (*Lion comes in.*) I never saw Lion in such a sad state before. Panther looks bad. Wolf and Fox look as if they had no friends left. What a sad plight Bear and Boar are in! But the Tiger does not look as if he could hurt any one. The Ass sick too? He does not look as bad as the rest.

(*The animals as they are named come in and take places facing Lion. Robin and*

*Turtle* remain where they are and are interested in all that is said and done.)

*Turtle* No, the Ass does not seem to be suffering a great deal.

*Robin* We must not talk now, Lion is about to speak.

*Lion* Friends, you know the purpose for which we are assembled here to-day ?

*Bear* To discover, if possible, the cause of this awful plague, which has made all our number sick and killed so many.

*Lion* You have stated the matter very clearly, friend Bear. But let me tell what I think is the reason for this plague.

*Wolf* Good ! If there is a reason, let us have it. What do you think it is, your majesty ?

*Several* Yes, yes, tell us the reason ! If possible, tell us a cure.

*Lion* First, for the reason. The plague, my friends, I do believe has been sent as punishment for our sins.

*Panther* Can this be true ?

*Tiger* I wonder.

*Fox* It seems strange.

*Bear* If we have sinned, as you seem to think, what shall we do to be forgiven ?

*Lion* I see no other way but that a sacrifice must be made.

*Wolf* Which one of us shall be offered for the sacrifice ? And by so doing will those remaining gain life and health ?

*Lion* I believe this will be the case.

*Ass* Now that seems wonderful, truly.

*Lion* In history we find it noted that lives have been devoted to just this sort of thing.

*Robin* Lion has informed himself carefully.

*Turtle* Yes, he has.

*Ass* What has the result been ?

*Lion* Why, that those who were suffering found almost instant relief.

*Ass* I marvel at this.

*Tiger* It is something to marvel at, I am sure. But will you go on, sir ?

*Lion* What I have to say now is, that we turn our eyes within. Let us set to work at once and ferret out the sin hidden in our hearts.

*Bear* You mean to have us each confess, make a clean breast of the whole matter ?

*Lion* Yes, exactly as I shall do now.

*Robin* It is unusual for the Lion to acknowledge that he has done wrong.

*Turtle* It is very strange. Listen! He is about to speak again.

*Lion* My appetite has often played the glutton. As I think of the sheep I have eaten I am led to question, had any of them ever harmed me? Of course there is no answer to make but this, "Not one." I can recall times when, by hunger pressed, I have eaten the shepherd with the rest. Friends, I yield myself, if there be need, but I think it only just that each should confess his sins, leave nothing unsaid, as I have done. The cry of laws of right and justice is that the guiltiest alone should die.

*Fox* Oh, sir, your majesty is humbler than a king should be.

*Turtle* I think the Fox is right.

*Robin* Why, so do I.

*Fox* You are oversqueamish, too, I think. It cannot be a crime, a sin, to eat a few stupid sheep.

*Bear* I never looked on eating sheep as a crime or sin either.

*Wolf* Nor I. Mutton is quite to my liking any day.

*Tiger* You may have the mutton, a shepherd for me every time.

*Panther* You are so very bold, cousin. I never complain if I have all the mutton I want.

*Fox* You see, sire, it was an act of grace in you to eat these sheep. By so doing you conferred an honor on all sheep.

*Wolf* Quite right.

*Panther* That's as it seems to me.

*Fox* As for eating a shepherd more or less, you treated such usurpers over our tribes only fairly.

*Tiger* Heartily we agree with all Reynard has said. Let him be applauded loudly.

(*There is loud applause from all but Robin and Turtle.*)

That is well. It has been made clear, I think, that we are free from every mortal sin.

*Chorus* Yes, yes !

*Lion* Come, Ass, let us hear from you. That innocent look may serve only as a mask. Tell us what is hidden in your innermost heart.

*Other Animals* Confess all.

*Ass* That I have confession to make is true.

*Robin* What evil has this fellow done ?

*Turtle* I cannot imagine.

*Lion* We wait for you, sir.

*Ass* One day, not long ago, I came into a meadow, the owner of which was nowhere about. The grass was green and tender. Keen hunger, and the Devil too, prompted me to eat.

*Several* Alas that you should have been tempted.

*Ass* I now confess that what I did was wrong.

*Wolf* Wrong, of course it was wrong ! This is the one, your majesty, fit for sacrifice. What ! Eat another's grass ? Oh shame !

*Lion* By him, no doubt, the plague came.

*Tiger* The ragged lout !

*Panther* The bald-pate !

*Boar* Scabby-hide !

*Bear* Masquerader !

*Fox* Hang him !

*Lion* No. Death that way were too sublime. We will share him among us.

*(The other animals fall upon Ass and drag him away.)*

*Robin* Could you make out that the Ass had been proved guilty of any crime ?

*Turtle* There was nothing I could discover that he was guilty of.

*Robin* Fears got the better of him. That is very sure to happen to the weak. Good day !

*Turtle* Yes, and then the strong take advantage. Good day ! — LA FONTAINE (*Adapted*).

## A QUEER DOCTOR

TIME: *Morning.*

PLACE: *At orchard entrance.*

FATHER CAT. MOTHER CAT. FATHER ROBIN.

MOTHER ROBIN. FOUR YOUNG ROBINS.

*Father Cat* My dear Mother Cat, you know the Robin family ?

*Mother Cat* Why, certainly. You mean the Robins whose house is just over there ?

*Father Cat* Yes, they are the very ones. To see those birds flying in and out every day as

I do makes my mouth water, and I am determined to have one soon for dinner.

*Mother Cat* One would make a nice meal, no matter what meal it was. But how will you catch one of those birds ? They are very spry. Even the baby Robins fly very well.

*Father Cat* I know that, but trust me to find a way. Every time I see one of those birds it makes me hungry. I would like one of the fattest of them this very minute. I must catch one to-day.

*Mother Cat* You will have to be patient, my dear. Remember all good things come to those who wait.

*Father Cat* I know that as well as you do. But look at those birds now. Something must be the matter, the mother Robin is in such a flutter.

*Mother Robin* Oh, Father Robin, little Bright-eyes is very ill this morning. She refuses even to taste a worm. I have tried her more than half a dozen times.

*Father Robin* What can be the matter ? It is a very sad state of affairs when a robin won't taste a worm.

*Mother Robin* It is, indeed. But I think she must have eaten too much at the Swallow children's party. They served a fly that I had never heard of. Brighteyes said it was pleasant to taste. But taste is one thing and what follows is quite another. Oh, I am just as worried as I can be! What can we do for the poor little thing?

*Father Robin* Now, Mother Robin, don't fear. I will take a look at Brighteyes and if I see she needs anything done for her, will go straight for Doctor Bluebird. He will soon make her well, I know.

*Mother Robin* I will bring Brighteyes Robin here to you. She is not so sick but she can walk when I help.

(She goes away and comes back with Brighteyes whom Father Robin looks at and has her show him her tongue.)

*Father Cat* Did you hear what the Robins said, Mother Cat? Little Robin Brighteyes is ill. This is my chance. As soon as Father Robin starts for the doctor I will go into the house and put on that dress of feathers you have. Then I will look exactly like Bluebird. With

that on I will go to Robin's house, and Mrs. Robin will let me in, for she will think I am Doctor Bluebird. Luck is mine at last, my dear. Get the kettle ready and we will have a fine dinner.

*Mother Cat* I think you are right. You were always a very wise cat. I will watch and listen while you are making yourself look like Doctor Bluebird.

*Father Robin* Take Brighteyes into the house again, my dear. Did you put her to bed?

*Mother Robin* Yes. You think she is very sick, don't you?

*Father Robin* I certainly do. I am going at once for Doctor Bluebird. He may have me call at the drug store for something for Brighteyes. In case he does he will get here before I do. You will do just as he tells you?

*Mother Robin* Why, of course I will.

*Father Robin* Good-by, my dear. Don't worry too much; our little Brighteyes will be well soon.

*Mother Robin* Oh, I hope so! Good-by. Hurry home.

(*Mother Robin goes into her house as Father*

*Cat returns dressed, as he thinks, to look like Doctor Bluebird.)*

*Mother Cat* Oh, you look just like Doctor Bluebird ! Now is your chance. Mother Robin is in her house and Father Robin has gone for the doctor. He told Mother Robin the doctor might come before he got back. She will be expecting him.

*Father Cat* You are quite sure I look all right ? I have a tall hat and here is a box of pills.

*Mother Cat* You look all right. Go quickly.

*Father Cat* You watch what happens. Very soon you will see me coming home with a nice fat bird for our dinner.

*(Father Cat goes to Robin's door and knocks.)*

*Mother Robin* (She is in her house speaking to her children.)

Oh, children, can that be the doctor so soon ? I will go and let him in. Who is there ?

*Father Cat* It is the doctor, Doctor Bluebird. Mr. Robin called and told me Brighteyes was ill. He said I was to hurry, and so here I am with my pills, ready to cure her. Won't you please open the door ?

*Mother Robin* I must see you first before I let you in.

(*Opens the door a little and looks out.*)

You look like a doctor. You speak kindly, too, and your clothes look like the clothes Doctor Bluebird wears. But our good, kind doctor does not have paws. No, I will not let you in. If I did you would eat us all up. Go away ! Go away ! Oh, I wish Father Robin were here.

*Father Robin* (*Appears suddenly and Father Cat jumps aside.*) I am here, my dear.

(*Mother Robin and the four little Robins come out. Brighteyes stays in the house.*)

So old Father Cat thought he would frighten you ? Thought he could make you think he was Doctor Bluebird, did he ? Go away, Father Cat, we want nothing of you. Come, we will drive him away.

(*Father and Mother Robin and three little Robins fly at Father Cat, who runs home.*)

*Little Robins* We will help. Horrid old Cat ! You were going to eat us up. But you didn't get the chance. No, you did not.

(*They fly after the Cat.*)

*Father Robin* There, we are rid of him. Come, we will go back to the house.

(*They find Brighteyes standing just outside the door.*)

*Brighteyes* ! Why are you not in bed ?

*Brighteyes* Oh, father, I am ever so much better. It did me good to see you scare that old Cat.

*Father Robin* It did you good to see the old Cat scared ? But that has not cured you. The doctor is coming soon and will do that. We will go into the house and wait for him.

*Father Cat* (*Mother Cat is very anxious about him.*) Dear me ! Dear me ! Such a narrow escape as I have had. Look at my clothes ; see how they are torn. And my pills are scattered over the ground. Oh, it is too bad, too bad !

*Mother Cat* Never mind about it now, I am glad to get you back alive. When those horrid birds were pulling and striking at you I thought you would surely be killed. Never try to play doctor again to a sick Robin. Come, shall we go into the house and be content with our saucer of milk ? — *Adapted.*

## WHOM THE FLOWERS THANKED

TIME: *Midday.*PLACE: *A field.*

BOBOLINK. SPARROW. CROW. WREN. HUMMING BIRD.  
ROBIN. WHITE DAISY. CLOVER. BUTTERCUP.  
GOLDENROD. DANDELION. ASTER. SUNFLOWER.  
YELLOW DAISY. SUN. CLOUDS.

*White Daisy* Oh, dear, I am so hot !

*Clover* It is the August sun. The Sun always shines hot in August.

*Buttercup* I wish I had a drink of water ; I never was so thirsty in all my life.

*Goldenrod* The heat is certainly terrible, and I don't usually complain.

*Dandelion* It is not often that I am around as late as this, but it is exceedingly hot.

*Aster* Yes, indeed, it is hot. Everything is dried up. I heard the brook trying to sing this morning, but his voice sounded all cracked ; everything is so dry !

*Sunflower* The red cow was going about complaining all day yesterday. She said she had not found a speck of green grass in a week, and the farmer was complaining because she was giving so little milk. "Doesn't he know,"

she said, "that if I am to give an abundance of milk, I must have green grass and plenty of it?"

*Yellow Daisy* It is a common complaint, — no rain. Not a drop has fallen in weeks. Nothing but heat, heat, heat! Now, like you, Goldenrod, and you, Sunflower, I am not in the habit of complaining when the weather is hot. But this August sun is getting to be too much for me. If I know what the feeling is like, I am dying of thirst.

*Dandelion* So am I.

*Clover* And I.

*Buttercup* And I am too.

*Aster* I shall have to give up soon.

*White Daisy* Oh, I am fainting away!

*Sunflower* I certainly cannot keep my head up any longer, for I am so very, very thirsty.

(*The birds come into the field.*)

*Bobolink* What can be the matter with the flowers?

*Sparrow* They are dying of thirst.

*Bobolink* There is water in the marsh, plenty of it.

*Sparrow* But the flowers cannot go to the marsh, the water has to be brought to them.

*Wren* There is water in the brook.

*Sparrow* Not very much, for I tried to bathe there this morning and scarcely got myself wet.

*Crow* Caw ! Caw ! It is a hot day.

*Humming Bird* Yes, it is. What is the matter with all the flowers ? Are they quite dead ?

*Crow* They look dead. Caw ! Caw !

*Humming Bird* I have been trying since early this morning to get honey enough from the flowers for a meal. If I am not more successful soon, I shall have to move to another neighborhood. How do you account for this strange state of affairs ?

*Crow* Caw ! Caw ! I don't know. I have heard some complaint about the heat.

*Sparrow* It is the heat. It is this August sun. The brook has been almost dried up by it, the pond in the pasture is nothing but a mud hole, and I have never seen so little water in the lake as is there now. If the raindrops don't visit us soon, why — Hark ! That was Robin calling.

*Wren* Yes. He is calling again. He is

asking the raindrops to come and revive the thirsty flowers.

*Bobolink* Do you see that little cloud up yonder. It has hidden the Sun. Now it is quite dark, the cloud has grown so large.

*Humming Bird* What a refreshing breeze ! A raindrop kissed me then.

*Crow* Caw ! Caw ! I am all wet. It is thundering too. You can stay here if you want to, I am going home.

*Sparrow* The raindrops are welcome !

*Bobolink* They are indeed. Wake up, little flowers. We must wake the flowers.

*All the Birds*

Wake, flowers, wake, the rain has come,  
The dry earth to make glad.

Be well again, you shall not die, —  
Awake and be not sad.

*Humming Bird* See Robin in the rain ! How glad he is !

*Wren* See him now, he is pulling a great fat worm out of the ground. Now he is singing. He is giving thanks because he can get plenty of worms once more.

*Robin*

Cheer, cheer, cheer, cheer, cheer, cheer !  
The cool, clean rain is here.  
The pretty flowers can't be dead ;  
Each is lifting now his head.

*Humming Bird* Well, I must go. I thank the raindrops. The flowers will have plenty of honey to give me now.

*Robin* We all have reason to thank the raindrops. See, the flowers are coming back to life. The raindrops washed them all clean. They are not thirsty now. Shall we go ? The flowers may want to be alone.

*Aster* How good I feel !

*Dandelion* It seems to me that I never felt better.

*White Daisy* Why, I am not dead ! I thought I was. There is the Sun, but I feel so cool and comfortable.

*Sunflower* That is the way we all feel. The raindrops have made us feel so.

*Other Flowers* The raindrops ?

*Sunflower* Don't you see them all about us ? They came out of that black cloud the wind is driving away.

*Yellow Daisy* I see the raindrops now.

*Clover* Yes, I do, too. You have made my head so cool, Raindrops. Thank you, Raindrops, but for your coming I should have died.

*Raindrops* We are not the ones to thank; thank the clouds; they sent us.

*Flowers* Clouds! Clouds! We thank you, Clouds. You sent the raindrops; they saved our lives.

*Clouds* Thank not us. The Sun is the one to thank. He saw you dying and called us from the ocean. The Wind brought us here, for he heard you sighing.

*Flowers* Sun and wind, we thank you for this kind act of yours.

*Sun* We are not the ones to thank.

*Clouds* No, thank not us.

*Sun* It is God whom you shall thank, who is ever watchful and kind. He heard your sighs, he saw you dying and took pity on you. We, Sun and Wind and Clouds and Raindrops, are only the givers of his bounty.

*Flowers* Then, dear God, we thank you for restoring us to life and happiness again.

LYMAN ABBOTT (*Adapted*).

## BREAKFAST TIME IN THE WHEAT-FIELD

TIME: *Sunrise.*

PLACE: *A wheatfield.*

ROBIN. BLUE JAY. CROW. SONG SPARROW. BLUEBIRD.  
FLICKER. WREN. YELLOWBIRD. SWALLOW. NUTHATCH.  
HUMMING BIRD. THRUSH. OVEN BIRD.  
FARMER.

*Robin (Alights at the edge of wheatfield where Blue Jay, Crow, Song Sparrow, Flicker, Wren, Nuthatch, and Yellowbird are assembled.) Good morning! Good morning! Good morning, everybody. It is a fine morning.*

*Blue Jay* Don't we know it?

*Robin* Now, Blue Jay, why do you have to be ill-natured? It is surely too beautiful a morning for one to be ill-tempered.

*Blue Jay* You needn't call me ill-tempered, Robin, for I am not.

*Robin* Well, some people think you are, and I am sure you did not speak in a very good-natured way to me. But, no matter! What are you all doing for breakfast?

*Song Sparrow* I have had a few bugs and grubs; there are a good many in the farmer's wheatfield.

*Crow* By the way he acts you would think he did not want any of them eaten. Why, I went to his cornfield yesterday to lunch on a lot of grasshoppers I saw there, when up he came with his gun, mad as he could be, and tried to kill me.

*Blue Jay* He saw me in his orchard yesterday as I was killing some of his worst enemies for my dinner. But he thought I was up to some mischief, and threw a stone at me, and I heard him say if he saw me when he had his gun he would blow me to pieces.

*Flicker* It is strange, I think, how he treats us birds. Some one who knows ought to tell him that we are amongst his very best friends. I have a nest and a little family in an old dead branch of a sour apple tree. He said he would kill us all, and burn the tree, but his wife stopped him. She knows how many great fat black ants I have eaten.

*Yellowbird* He doesn't appreciate what you have done, and won't. Why, my family and

I have been killing insects for him all summer, but he would not hesitate to kill any one of us and say, "That good-for-nothing bird won't bother me again."

*Robin* That's the way it goes. He saw me take a bite out of a cherry one day, and my, what a row he made, and the things he threatened to do to me. You would have thought that one cherry was worth more than all his farm. Now I will confess to a fondness for cherries, but I will say that I do the farmer more good than his cherries would bring him in money.

*Wren* I say that about myself, and I am not one to boast a great deal.

*Nuthatch* No, you are not, Mr. Wren. I know you as a perfectly good friend to all mankind, especially good to farmers. But I know that you are not always appreciated by them any more than we Nuthatches are, who are working in his interest quite all the time.

*Robin* Don't you think we have gone quite far from the matter of breakfast? I would like a few good fat worms just at this time.

*Crow* Well, I would like a lot more of those grasshoppers that I found yesterday. I could eat for an hour, they were that good.

*Song Sparrow* Well, if the farmer came along and found you and Robin eating worms and grasshoppers, he would say you were both vagabonds, of no use in the world, and if he had his gun handy, he would try his very best to shoot you.

*Nuthatch* I can tell you one thing, the farmer will have to improve his aim before he puts many of us out of the way.

*Song Sparrow* I know that, for he fired a shot at me one day in the late spring when I was sitting by the roadside singing, and it went ever so much to one side.

*Flicker* That is quite like him. I have had much the same experience.

*Robin* He is blind to his blessings.

*Crow* Yes, he is, and I can't sing, only eat a few thousand grasshoppers and some other pests.

*Robin* He doesn't thank you for any of these things, but showers you with abuse all the

year for eating a few kernels of corn. But I must say I am getting very hungry, and shall have to look for those worms soon.

*Yellowbird* Hark ! Who is singing so brightly and clearly ?

*Thrush* (*Singing in the distance.*)

Beauty decks the morning

In a regal dress,

Garment rich and splendid,

Garb of happiness.

*Robin* That is my cousin Thrush.

*Yellowbird* Of course it is, but he keeps so much to the woods that I seldom see or hear him. There he is now. (*As Thrush comes to the others.*) Good morning, Thrush.

*Thrush* Good morning, Yellowbird. Good morning, cousin.

*Robin* Good morning. Are you not afraid of meeting the farmer ?

*Thrush* Why, is he about ? I am sure I saw him going off to the cornfield.

*Crow* Did he have his gun ?

*Thrush* I thought it was a gun he was carrying.

*Crow* Then he is looking for me.

*Blue Jay* Well, he isn't likely to come here very soon.

*Wren* There will be time enough for us to have breakfast?

*Thrush* Oh, I should say so. What is good to eat in this wheatfield?

*Bluebird* Everything; all sorts of bugs, grubs, and worms, flies and spiders.

*Song Sparrow* There are a lot of weeds that have gone to seed; I saw them as I flew here. They make a fine breakfast.

*Wren* Yes, they do, I suppose, but I much prefer a variety of insects.

*Blue Jay* You can give me seeds, or you can give me insects and grubs. I like pretty well the farmer's corn when it is ripe, and some of the children know that I like peanuts.

*Robin* You don't any of you know how good an earthworm is. My family cares more for them than anything else.

*Bluebird* You may have the earthworms, Robin, but I would starve before I would eat one.

*Crow* It is with us, I guess, as I have heard say it is with men, — every one to his taste.

*Flicker* Yes, we would find that to be so if we knew what all the birds in the world eat. Who is that calling?

*Nuthatch* (*Listens attentively to call of Oven Bird.*) That's my friend Oven Bird. He has his queer little home amongst the sticks and dried leaves over there in the woods where I spend a good share of my time.

*Yellowbird* Do I see him coming this way?

*Nuthatch* Yes, he must think he will find a good breakfast here with us. How do you do?

*Oven Bird* How do you do, Nuthatch? How do you do, friends? Are you finding something good for breakfast?

*Robin* I just heard an earthworm; I'll have him out in a second.

*Oven Bird* Ugh! Don't you offer him to me.

*Crow* I see a grasshopper.

*Oven Bird* You may have your grasshoppers.

*Song Sparrow* There is a nice lot of weed seeds over here.

*Oven Bird* I don't know that I care for weed seeds. If —

*Yellowbird* That was a very good tasting fly I caught just now.

*Flicker* You may care for some of these great black ants I have found in this old log.

*Oven Bird* (*Humming Bird comes in, going wherever there is a flower.*) I don't care at all for ants.

*Humming Bird* How do you like honey?

*Several* Oh, it is Humming Bird!

*Oven Bird* Honey? I don't know what it is.

*Humming Bird* It is one of the best things to eat there is in the world.

*Oven Bird* Is it that sweet, sticky stuff the bees make and hide in hollow trees?

*Humming Bird* Yes, and they get it from the heart of the flower, just as I do.

*Oven Bird* Well, I never tasted it, and I know I should not like it.

*Wren* I guess you like grubs and insects. I like them best.

*Oven Bird* Yes, I like those things, and a few berries.

*Wren* Berries are not bad.

*Bluebird* I wonder if we don't all of us like berries, some sorts at any rate?

*Robin* I know for one I like strawberries.

*Song Sparrow* They are certainly very nice, and so are raspberries.

*Wren* Yes, raspberries are nice, although I have never eaten very many. But who is that coming, flying so fast.

*Blue Jay* That? Why, that is Swallow. He is wonderfully graceful flying, but so awkward on his feet.

*Thrush* He is coming toward us as if he were the bearer of news.

*Flicker* What can it be? I hope it is nothing bad.

*Crow* It may be something bad; possibly he has seen the farmer —

*Swallow* (*Comes in swiftly. He finds it not an easy matter to stand when he has stopped flying.*) Friends, you must hurry from here; the farmer is coming and he has his gun. He is mad because he did not find you, Crow.

*Crow* Yes, and he would have been madder yet if he had happened upon me.

*Swallow* He says we are all a lot of thieves, and are what keep him poor. I would liked to have told him that had he cultivated his corn oftener he would be richer.

*Song Sparrow* That is true, and this wheat-field shows many signs of neglect.

*Yellowbird* That is what makes it such a good place to come for breakfast.

*Robin* His potato field shows the same neglect ; it is overrun with potato beetles, and he killed a Bob White there yesterday who was helping the farmer by eating the beetles.

*Swallow* I wouldn't stay here, friends, talking about the faults of the farmer. Follow me and I will steer you away from him.

*Blue Jay* I am not going.

*Crow* Nor I.

*Several* But you must come.

*Robin* He will bag you both.

*Crow* He has been trying for a year to do that to me.

*Blue Jay* He has wasted a pound of powder on me already.

*Swallow* Well, are the rest of you coming ? The farmer can't be far away.

*Robin* Some one is coming now, I hear feet striking the ground.

*Bluebird* We must start at once, or —

*Farmer* (Approaching, but still at some dis-

*tance.)* They are in this wheatfield; I see signs of them everywhere. I will have a score of them before they can get out of range of my gun.

*Swallow* You heard that? Come, and don't be afraid to follow me.

*(Flies out swiftly.)*

*Humming Bird* You had better come along, Crow and Blue Jay.

*Crow and Blue Jay* No, we mean to have some fun.

*(All the birds but these two fly after Swallow.)*

*Crow and Blue Jay hide themselves.)*

*Farmer* *(Rushes in, gun in hand.)* Now, where are those thieving —

*Crow* Caw! Caw! Caw!

*Farmer* *(Ready to shoot.)* He's over here.

*Crow* Caw! Caw! Caw!

*Farmer* He has gone over there. I'll blow him into a thousand pieces. I'll —

*Blue Jay* *(Laughs a cracked laugh.)* Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

*Farmer* Where is that Blue Jay? He is the worst pest of them all.

*Blue Jay* *(Goes quickly from one place to*

*another, keeping out of farmer's sight.)* Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha ! Ha, ha, ha, ha !

*Farmer* He will suffer if I do get sight of him.

*Crow* Caw ! Caw ! Caw !

*Farmer* That black thief again.

*Blue Jay* Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha ! Ha, ha, ha, ha !

*Farmer* There's that Jay. I'll kill something.

(Runs out, shoots off gun as he gets out of sight.)

*Blue Jay* (As he and Crow come into view again.) Oh, that is too bad ! He has killed Wren, as good a friend as he has among the birds.

*Crow* (Going out with Blue Jay.) He calls me a black fool, but I have wit enough to know who my friends are.

## THE THREE GOATS NAMED BRUSE

TIME: *Morning.*

PLACE: *A mountain side, a mountain opposite, a stream, crossed by a bridge, running between.*

Two Boys. Two Girls. THREE GOATS. TROLL.  
BRIDGE.

*Great Goat* (*Girls and boys are playing at the farther end of bridge.*) That's a fine pasture, I know, on the mountain beyond the waterfall. Can't you see how green the grass looks?

*Medium Goat* The grass beyond the waterfall certainly does look green. There seems to be a-plenty of it too. We haven't enough here to more than keep us alive. It makes my mouth water to talk about it. Besides, there are no goats over there to eat the grass.

*Great Goat* It is all going to waste as one can plainly see.

*Little Goat* I mean to make my dinner of that grass this very day.

*Great Goat* I shall make my dinner of it too.

*Medium Goat* And I shall dine with you.

*Great Goat* Let me tell you, Little Brother, what you do. You cannot eat so fast as we.

Do you cross the bridge first, and we will follow soon after.

*Little Goat* All right, brothers, I will start now, for I am hungry enough to eat these stones.

*First Girl* See Little Goat coming to the bridge ! Do you think he means to cross it ?

*First Boy* He walks as if he would try to get across. Notice how high in the air he carries his head.

*First Girl* Yes, doesn't he ?

*Second Girl* And do you see how important he looks ?

*First Boy* I don't believe Little Goat knows about the Troll who lives in the waterfall.

*First Girl* Is there a Troll living in the waterfall ?

*First Boy* Yes. He is sure to kill Little Goat if he hears him crossing the bridge.

*First Girl* What is the Troll like ?

*First Boy* He is fearfully ugly. His eyes are as big as kettle covers, and his nose is as long as a broomstick.

*First Girl* Oh, he can't be one bit pretty !

*First Boy* No, he isn't.

*Second Girl* Wouldn't you like to see him?

*First Girl* Of course I would.

*First Boy* If Little Goat wakes Troll up, you will see him.

*First Girl* Little Goat is going on to the bridge now. Hark! What is that? That very strange noise. What is it? Don't you hear?

*The Others* Yes, we hear.

*Bridge* Trip, trap; trip, trap; trip, trap.

*First Boy* That is Bridge warning Troll that some one is crossing the stream.

*Troll* Who trips on my bridge?

*First Boy* That was Troll.

*First Girl* Shall we see him?

*First Boy* I don't know.

*Troll* Who trips on my bridge?

*First Girl* How big and deep his voice is!

*First Boy* Yes. But hear what Little Goat says.

*Little Goat* It is only Little Goat Bruse who trips on your bridge.

*Troll* What do you want?

*Little Goat* I am going over to the other mountain to get my dinner and grow fat.

*First Girl* Little Goat's voice is so soft. Oh ! There is Troll's head coming up out of the water now.

*Second Girl* How ugly looking he is.

*Troll* No, you won't go over to the other mountain and get your dinner. I am going to eat you up.

*Little Goat* Please — please don't hurt me, or eat me either. In a little while my brother, Medium Goat Bruse, is going to cross the bridge. He is much bigger than I. I would not make you a mouthful.

*Troll* Very well, you may go to the other mountain.

(*Troll goes out of sight.*)

*First Boy* Little Goat is clever.

*Second Boy* Hello, Little Goat ! There is plenty of good grass here.

*First Girl* I am so glad, Little Goat, that you escaped being eaten.

*Second Girl* So am I. Troll was all ready to kill you. Run now to where the sweetest of the green grass is.

*First Boy* Here comes Medium Goat, head just as high in air as Little Goat held his.

*Second Boy* He isn't thinking of anything but the green grass he hopes to find here.

*First Girl* Let's all keep still.

*Second Girl* Yes, do; I want to hear what Bridge says this time, and what Troll will say too.

*Bridge* Trap, trap, trap, trap, trap, trap.

*Troll* Who is that trap traps over my bridge?

*Medium Goat* Only Medium Goat Bruse. I am going over to the other mountain for my dinner. The grass is very green there, and I know it must be sweet. It will make me fat.

*Troll* It will not make you fat. You shall not get one mouthful of it. I mean to eat you.

*Medium Goat* Now, please don't do that! I will tell you why. I am very thin; there is not much to me now but bones. You would not like me to eat, I know you wouldn't. But my brother, Great Goat Bruse, who is ever so much bigger than I, will come this way soon. He would make you a great meal.

*Troll* Very well, you may pass along, and I will wait for your brother, Great Goat Bruse.

*Medium Goat* Thank you!

*First Boy* I can't see but what Medium Goat is just as clever as Little Goat.

*Second Boy* Yes, he is every bit as clever.

*Medium Goat* I wonder how brother Great Goat will manage to get across the bridge? I won't stop to see. I do hope no harm comes to him. Where can brother Little Goat be? I see him! Isn't he having a splendid time eating green grass?

*First Girl* See how glad Little Goat is to welcome his brother. It won't take them long to grow fat.

*First Boy* No. What do you think Great Goat is likely to do?

*Second Boy* I can't guess. If he is half as clever as his brothers, Troll will go without goat flesh for some time yet.

*First Girl* I don't believe Troll will get him. There is Great Goat coming toward the bridge now.

*Second Girl* What a big fellow he is!

*First Boy* Can you see his horns? They look very sharp.

*Second Boy* They are sharp. He would hurt anybody he struck with them.

*First Girl* I wish he would kill the ugly Troll.  
I don't like the creature.

*Second Girl* I don't either.

*Second Boy* Never mind now, sister. Let us hear what Bridge says, Great Goat has just stepped upon it.

*Bridge* Trap, trop ; trap, trop ; trap, trop ; — ah ! Ah !

*Troll* Who goes tramping on my bridge so heavy that I can see the boards bend and hear them crack ?

*Great Goat* (Speaks in a clear, steady voice.) Great Goat Bruse.

*First Girl* Great Goat is not afraid ?

*First Boy* No, he is no coward.

*Troll* Are you going to the other mountain ?

*Great Goat* Yes.

*Troll* To eat grass ?

*Great Goat* Yes, to eat the green grass that grows there so abundantly.

*Troll* You are not going to do any such thing. All the eating that is done I am going to do.

*Great Goat* Are you going to eat the grass ?

*Troll* No, I am going to eat you, — yes, you.

*Great Goat* Are you, really ?

*Troll* Yes. I am coming after you now.

*First Girl* Isn't he horrible to look at?

*Second Girl* Oh, he is!

*First Boy* He is mad all through.

*Second Boy* Being mad won't help him any.

*First Girl* No. Do you see what Great Goat is going to do?

*Second Girl* I see!

*First Boy* So do I!

*Second Boy* What?

*First Boy* Watch him.

*Second Boy* I see now. Good! Troll is dead.

*First Girl* Yes, Great Goat killed him with his sharp horns. He thrust them into Troll's eyes.

*Second Girl* See Great Goat running to join his brothers!

*Second Boy* Do you see him talking with them? He is telling how he killed the Troll and got across the bridge.

*Great Goat* Yes, he thought he could frighten me.

*Little Goat* But he didn't?

*Great Goat* No. Just as he raised his eyes on a level with mine I struck him squarely with my two horns. He was killed instantly.

*Medium Goat* Served the ugly creature right.  
He never did any good in the world. How  
do you like the grass, brother?

*Great Goat* It is the best I ever tasted. We  
won't ever go back to the other mountain.  
Here is grass enough to last us as long as we  
live.

— Norwegian Tale (*Adapted*).

## HOW THE OAK TREE BECAME KING

### I

TIME: *Morning.*

PLACE: *A forest.*

SPRUCE TREE. HEMLOCK. FIR. OAK. FLOWERS.  
BLUEBIRD. WOODPECKER. VOICE. ROBIN.

*Spruce Tree* Have you noticed how big and  
tall the Oak is getting to be?

*Hemlock* Yes, he has grown to be very large.

*Fir* He is strong too.

*Spruce* Oh, he is very strong.

*Hemlock* Hark! He is talking to the flowers  
growing in his shade.

*Oak* Dear flowers, I love you all. It is  
good to live for you, pretty flowers.

*Flowers* Thank you, Oak Tree.

*Oak* Is that you, Bluebird?

*Bluebird* Yes, Oak Tree.

*Oak* You are looking for a place to build your nest. Build it in my branches. Here comes Robin; he wants to build a home too. You are welcome, Robin, to build in my branches.

*Robin* Thank you, Oak Tree. I can make a fine home here. I will go now and tell my mate.

Cheer, cheer, cheer, cheer, cheer !  
I go to tell my Dear,  
That in the great Oak Tree  
Is where our home will be.

*Oak* Robin is a jolly fellow. I often wonder if the world could possibly get on without him. Oh, little Sparrow, you are looking for a home too. Build in my branches. There is room in my wide arms for you all.

*Birds* Oak Tree, you are very, very kind. We will build our homes in your great strong, branches. Every day we will sing to you, and we will eat the worms and insects that might do you harm.

*Oak* You are such thoughtful friends. Thank you for making your homes here. Who is that knocking? Oh, it is you, Downy Woodpecker?

*Woodpecker* Yes, Oak Tree. May I, too, have a home here?

*Voice* (*Speaks from behind Oak Tree. Is supposed to be hidden.*) Oh, say no! Say no! Oak Tree, say no. He will pick a hole in your side.

*Oak* Why, Woodpecker must have a home. Yes, Woodpecker, you may have a home here.

*Woodpecker* Thank you very much, Oak Tree. I will build my home in this great branch. It is an excellent place. I shall not be long about it, for my bill is strong and sharp. And, Oak Tree, I will try not to hurt you.

## II

TIME: *A morning in Autumn.*

PLACE: *A forest.*

OAK.      SQUIRREL.      VOICE.

*Oak* Hello, merry Squirrel! You know it is autumn. You have come for acorns so as not to be hungry when winter is here.

*Squirrel* Yes, Oak Tree. May I have what acorns I want?

*Voice (Behind Oak Tree.)* Tell him no. You cannot give your acorns. They will be little Oaks next year.

*Oak* There will be plenty of oak trees if I give Squirrel what acorns he needs. Winter is coming, it will be long and cold. Merry Squirrel, take all my acorns if they are wanted for food.

*Squirrel* Oh, Oak Tree, you are so kind to all!

*Oak* I like to help others when I can. You will be warm and happy, I hope, through the wild winter.

*Squirrel* I shall certainly be warm and happy now that you have given me your acorns.

### III

TIME: *A winter evening.*

PLACE: *A Forest.*

OAK. TRAVELER. WIND. FAIRY QUEEN. FAIRIES.

*Oak* How quickly the darkness comes. The night is cold. I am quite alone. All the

birds have gone and Squirrel is asleep in his warm, comfortable home.

(*Traveler appears. He is cold and the wind blows hard against him.*)

*Traveler* What shall I do this bitter night ? I am far from any dwelling, and farther yet from home. Must I perish with the cold in the night that is fast coming on ? What was it touched me ? Oh, the Wind ! What is he saying ?

*Wind* Oak Tree ! Oak Tree ! Do not do it ! Oh, do not do it !

*Traveler* The Wind spoke to that Oak Tree. What is it he warned the Oak Tree not to do ? Oak Tree is speaking, possibly I can tell what he is saying.

*Oak* Good Traveler, take me and build a fire that you may be warm and not die this night.

*Traveler* Thank you, Oak Tree, thank you ! I will take some of your branches. There, I have enough. Now I have my fire. How pleasant the warmth is ! I shall not be cold or die, thanks once more to you, Oak Tree.

*Oak* The Traveler sleeps. Now all the forest is still. I am quite the only one awake.

*Traveler* (*Awakens suddenly.*) Who are these coming here? Why, they are fairies!

*Fairy Queen* Make beautiful leaves for Oak Tree.

*Fairies* We will make Oak Tree very beautiful leaves.

*Fairy Queen* And carve for him acorns of rare beauty.

*Traveler* Oak Tree, how you have changed! You are larger than all the forest trees, you stand far above their heads.

*Fairy Queen* The Sun is coming, morning is here. Put on Oak Tree's crown. Give to him his acorns, they are his jewels.

*Fairies* How beautiful you are, Oak Tree. Your crown of green is more perfect than any golden crown. The birds have come to sing songs of praise to you. Hear what our queen has to say.

*Fairy Queen* Hereafter you shall be king of all the trees.

*The Trees* Behold, the Oak Tree has been crowned our King!

— *Adapted.*

## THE WIND

TIME: *Morning.*PLACE: *A forest.*

WIND. SEVERAL MAPLE TREES. WILLOW TREES. SEVERAL SPRUCE TREES. TWO OR THREE CHESTNUT TREES. AN ELM TREE. SEVERAL OAK TREES.

*Wind (Runs into the forest and runs here and there.)* I feel just like having a frolic this morning. Here amongst these trees is as good a place as I know of. They shall all feel me, — but who has ever seen me? Ha! Ha! Ha! Wake up, Little Oak!

*First Little Oak* Who shook me then?

*Second Little Oak* Who pushed me?

*First Maple* Some one is shaking my leaves.

*Second Maple* Mine are being shaken too.

*First Little Oak* It couldn't have been the sunbeams.

*Second Little Oak* Of course not. It is easy to see what the sunbeams are doing.

*Wind* I have got them all puzzled. Ha! Ha! Ha! I knew that they couldn't see me. No one has seen me. But how I can make myself felt! Tremble, Spruce Tree.

*Spruce Tree* Who did that?

*Wind* Bend your head, Willow.

*Willow* Oh ! Oh ! My back will be broken.

*Wind* Poor fellow ! Did I hurt him ? I guess not. But he has got to get used to me. These Chestnuts look as if nothing ever disturbed them. Ha, ha, ha ! Ha, ha, ha ! That time they felt me.

*Chestnut Tree* What can be the matter ? Why — Oh ! Oh, dear ! Who is rocking me so ?

*Second Chestnut* Every leaf on me is shaking as if it were afraid.

*First Chestnut* I feel as if I might be thrown out of my place.

*Wind* What a fuss these trees are making. Those Oak Trees didn't wake up ? We will see about that. It is time they had their eyes open. They must get them open wide. I won't be quite so harsh with them. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha !

*Several Little Oaks* Did any one speak ?

*First Little Oak* I didn't.

*Second Little Oak* Nor I.

*Three or Four Little Oaks* But some one did.

*Wind* Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha !

*First Little Oak* Did you hear that ?

*Second Little Oak* I was shaken again.

*Third Little Oak* I was pushed again.

*First Little Oak* I don't see any one.

*Several Little Oaks* We don't either.

*Wind* Of course you don't. If they only knew what I am saying, wouldn't it make them curious? Ha, ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha!

*First Little Oak* Hear him?

*Second Little Oak* Yes, and I felt him, too. Such a push as I got then.

*Tiny Oak* Oh! I am afraid. My head almost touched the ground.

*Wind* There's old Father Oak. Not much use to trouble him. He is seldom disturbed by anything I may do. We have been pretty good playfellows now for many a year. Why, haven't I been to the Elm? He makes a fine appearance. He is but little less strong than Father Oak. I guess, however, I can give him a bit of a start. Ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha!

*Elm* What happened? Who did that? My head was almost taken off.

*Wind* Ha, ha, ha, ha! I disturbed his dignity. Ha, ha, ha!

*Elm* Oh, I know who it is, that saucy fellow Wind. I'd give a good deal to see him once.

*Wind* Ha, ha, ha !

*Elm* He's right here beside me. I do wish I could see him.

*Wind* He'd better not be too curious. It ought to be enough for any one to just feel me, especially when I'm showing off my strength. Ha, ha ! Ha, ha !

*Elm* He is going away. He caught those Spruces napping.

*Wind* Ha, ha, ha ! Ha, ha, ha ! Ha, ha ! Ha, ha ! That time I almost made their bones crack.

*First Spruce* Who can have given me such a push ?

*Second Spruce* I thought all my branches were being torn off.

*Several Spruces* It was terrible the way we were bent, almost double.

*Wind* Am I really being too rough ? But I am having such fun, — such fun ! Oh, I must make the leaves dance ! Ha, ha, ha ! Such a merry dance.

*The Leaves* (*Trees speak.*) Oh, dear, oh,

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dear ! Who can it be that scares us so ? We wish he would go away.

*Father Oak* My children, I can tell you all about this strange visitor. It is the wind.

*Chorus of Trees* The wind ?

*Father Oak* Yes.

*Chorus of Trees* Why is it we can't see him ?

*Father Oak* He has never been seen by any one. But I have heard and felt him often, and so have other old trees of the forest.

*Chorus of Trees* We have heard and felt him to-day. He is so different from almost everything else.

*Father Oak* Do not fear him. He is a good friend. It is not often he does harm to any of us. He strengthens and helps us to grow strong. He loves a frolic, and sometimes his play is a trifle rough. But more often he is gentle and kind. When you know him as well as I do, or even half as well, you will learn to love him. I love him very much.

*Wind* It was good, I am sure, of the Old Oak to speak kindly of me. I will remember to be more gentle the next time I come to the forest.

(Goes out quickly. He is heard calling, his voice growing fainter and fainter.)

Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha ! H-a, h-a, haaaa !  
*A Tree* Has the Wind gone ?

*Father Oak* Yes, he has gone to his home in the hills.

*The Leaves* (*Trees speak.*) We are glad. We wish he might stay there all the time.

*Father Oak* You won't wish that when you know him better. You will find him on the whole a good friend.

## WHEN THE HOUSEHOLD SLEEPS

TIME: *Night.*

PLACE: *Living room.*

HIGH CHAIR. ARM CHAIR. ROCKING CHAIR.  
Two DINING ROOM CHAIRS.

*High Chair* What good company the clock is !

*Arm Chair* Yes, I like to hear him. He has much to say and he is always telling us something we want to know.

*First Dining Room Chair* I hear a mouse. He's in the pantry.

*Second Dining Room Chair* I am glad he is not in this room. I have not forgotten the time one ran up my back. It nearly makes me shiver to think of it.

*High Chair* I can imagine it would.

*Arm Chair* So can I.

*High Chair* How bright the moon is to-night ?

*Rocking Chair* Ah, me ! That is the very moon I used to see when I lived in the woods.

*First Dining Room Chair* You lived in the woods ?

*Rocking Chair* Yes. But I was speaking of the moon. She has just the same kind, round face. I always liked her.

*Arm Chair* Pray, what was your name when you lived in the woods ?

*Rocking Chair* My name was Maple. And what was yours ?

*Arm Chair* Do you not know that I am Oak ?

*Rocking Chair* No. It is so hard in these days to tell if we are any of us what we think we are.

*First Dining Room Chair* That is true. My brothers and I are called Mahogany, but our legs are Black Birch.

*Arm Chair* I know that I am all Oak.

*Rocking Chair* I should know if I could have seen you when I stood in the forest.

*Arm Chair* You can take my word for it, I am what I say I am. When I stood in the forest my trunk was three feet through. You never saw such long branches.

*High Chair* I have. I am Pine, I grew by an oak tree. The branches seemed to shade the whole place.

*Arm Chair* Mine did, I thought. I had thousands of leaves. They were as glossy and bright as that mirror it seems now. And my acorns!

*High Chair* I remember the acorns on the oak tree I knew. The squirrels would go after them when they came for the seeds in my cones.

*Arm Chair* Yes. The bluejays fed on mine too. I am sure I have planted enough acorns to make a great forest.

*Rocking Chair* That is fine indeed. I am sure the squirrels and bluejays loved you. How tall, and grand, and strong you must have been.

*Arm Chair* Thank you, I was all these things.

People praised me a great deal. But tell us about yourself.

*Other Chairs* Yes, do.

*Rocking Chair* Ah, what beautiful days those were ! I did not live in a forest or grove but stood in a pleasant field. I had gray bark. It was smooth ; my limbs were slender and graceful. In the Spring blossoms red as coral hung from them. My leaves were more graceful and beautiful than you can imagine.

*Arm Chair* I have heard of your beautiful leaves. Once the leaf of a maple was left at my feet by the wind. It was very red.

*Rocking Chair* Mine always were in autumn. My seeds were not like your acorns, each had a pair of wings. When I let them go they would fly with the wind. As soon as they came to the ground they would hide themselves in the soft hollows to make new maple groves.

*High Chair* Did the birds build in your branches ?

*Rocking Chair* Yes, robins would build there. Children loved to play in the shade at my feet. Those were beautiful days indeed. I shall not forget them.

*Arm Chair* How came you here, friend?

*Rocking Chair* I have never told you?

*Arm Chair* No.

*High Chair* Did not men cut you down?  
They did me. My branches were chopped  
away and I was torn to pieces by sharp, swift-  
turning saws.

*Rocking Chair* All these things were done to  
me. I was dragged hither and thither, cut  
asunder and beaten. I never dreamed what  
was to become of me. Then I found myself  
here in this new shape.

*Arm Chair* If you felt as I did you thought  
the change a sad one.

*Rocking Chair* I did at first. It is a sweet  
thing, however, to be a little girl's rocking  
chair.

*Arm Chair* Yes, I imagine so. She seems to  
love you.

*Rocking Chair* Oh, very much! Rachel  
wants me with her when she sits at her  
mother's side and listens to the stories she  
tells so well. I believe I am of as much use  
in the world as when I stood in the field a  
maple tree.

*High Chair* Quite likely you are.

*Arm Chair* Yes, quite likely. But when I think how tall and strong and straight I was as an oak tree, that in my branches hundreds of men might have sat, I grow sad. See me now! What am I good for?

*Rocking Chair* Good for? Why, you could not be spared. You are the chair the dear grandmother likes best. You are big, roomy, and strong. She needs to feel your strength.

*High Chair* She does indeed. I heard her say only yesterday\* to the baby when I held it, "We cannot spare our chairs, can we?" He did not know what she meant, but I did. We are both doing a good work here.

*Arm Chair* Yes, if I stop to think of it, I know we are. But I love to recall those other days when I stood under the broad, lofty sky, where I looked upon the sun and felt the wind, and at night saw the moonbeams at play in my branches.

— *Adapted.*

## THE DINNER GETS ACQUAINTED

TIME: *Evening.*

PLACE: *Dining room.*

CARROT. BEET. SOUP. GRAVY. BREAD. CARVING  
KNIFE. CATSUP. MEAT. POTATO. TURNIP. ON-  
IONS. CUCUMBER. RAISINS. A DATE. GINGER  
ROOT. CHINESE NUT. TEA. SALT. SUGAR.

*Carrot* Are you sure you heard the dinner bell ring?

*Beet* Yes, it rang nearly five minutes ago.

*Soup* Well, I am getting cold.

*Gravy* I shall be as cold as you are soon. No one has thought to cover us.

*Bread* We meet often but do not know each other very well. This is a good time to get acquainted.

*Carving Knife* I feel quite too dull this evening to talk.

*Catsup* It is something to be a good listener. Most of the time it is all that is left for me to do, they keep me bottled so tight.

*Bread* Well, you made a long speech that time. Oh, I know you.

*Meat* You know me?

*Bread* Yes. You are a leg of a sheep. Only a few days ago you were walking about in the green pasture.

*Meat* Yes, and you were growing near by in the wheat field.

*Bread* Not I. It is a long time since I saw the wheat field. I have been through the mill since then. That takes time.

*Soup* I wish I did not feel so cold.

*Bread* Potato, you come from underground, what is it like there?

*Potato* It is very dark. But I like dark places.

*Turnip* So do I, and so do those big onions over there.

*Onions* If you care to know, we came from Spain.

*Bread* What are you laughing at, Cucumber? Tell us, perhaps we shall all think it funny and want to laugh too.

*Cucumber* Those onions may be Spanish, I won't say they are not, but they grew down in our field. I lay on the ground and laughed at them when they were pulled up yesterday.

*Raisins* Leave the onions alone. They may

not have come from Spain, but I did. At one time I was as fine a bunch of grapes as ever you saw. Then I was dried in the sun, laid flat in a box, and sent here.

*A Date* You talk as if Spain were a long distance away. I came from Turkey, and that is much farther.

*Ginger Root* I came from India, which is farther still.

*Chinese Nut* I came from China, and that is on the other side of the world.

*Tea* I came from China too. Once I was a green leaf; now I am dry and brown.

*Salt* Do you care to hear a story?

*Voices* Yes, yes! Tell us a story, do.

*Salt* It will be about myself. I live in all parts of the world.

*Ginger Root* Everybody knows you are a very common person.

*Salt* Thank you. You are candid, we all know. I am often taken from sea water. There is a great deal of salt in the sea water. When the pools on the rocks dry up in the hot sun you will find salt left on the rocks.

*Voices* How strange.

*Potato* I thought so when I first heard it. But Salt is a good friend of mine and has told me about this often.

*Salt* Sometimes I am found on the land. There are salt mines in Europe and in some places in America. In New York, Michigan, and some other states there are salt wells.

*Meat* Indeed ! That is a fine story.

*Bread* Was there ever anything more stupid than a cold leg of mutton ?

*Carrot* Nothing, I guess.

*Sugar* Listen to me ; see how fine and white I am. Do you know what made me so ? I had to go through black charcoal.

*Date* And it made you white ? That is a strange story too. I grew on a tree where I saw many things, but I never saw anything so strange as that.

*Sugar* Sugar cane grows in hot countries. The canes are put into a mill and the juice pressed out. Then the juice is heated ; part of it becomes molasses and part turns into sugar. The sugar is never very white until it goes through charcoal.

*Potato* Is it wood charcoal ? I know that

kind because I have been baked in wood ashes.

*Sugar* No, it is charcoal made out of burned bones.

*Salt* Yet you are as clean and white as I am. This is a very wonderful world.

*Bread* Wonderful it certainly is. But every one be still now, they are coming to dinner.

*Soup* I am so cold.

*Gravy* I am too.

*Catsup* Well, they cannot blame you. Perhaps I can warm you up a bit.

— *Adapted.*

## TRIFLES

### I

TIME: *Morning.*

PLACE: *Skyland and Earth.*

MOTHER NATURE. TINY RAINDROP. MOTHER MAYFLOWER. MAYFLOWER. FATHER SUN. RAY SUNBEAM.

*Mother Nature* Tiny Raindrop! Tiny Raindrop! Don't you hear me calling?

*Tiny Raindrop* Yes, Mother Nature, I hear you. What do you want me to do?

*Mother Nature* I want you to go out.

*Tiny Raindrop* Oh, don't send me out, please ! It is cloudy and dark. There is not one bit of blue sky to be seen. Why, it is not nice out at all. It is chilly, too, I know. Can't you send me just as well some other day ?

*Mother Nature* I wish you to go now. You are old enough to help in the world by carrying gladness to the buds and happiness to the flowers.

*Tiny Raindrop* But, Mother Nature, I am only a very little thing.

*Mother Nature* You are pouting, dear. I don't like any of my children to pout.

*Tiny Raindrop* What can I do to help ? Besides, all the snow hasn't gone yet and I may freeze if I go out.

*Mother Nature* Nonsense ! Nonsense ! These are only excuses. The days are getting warmer. There is very little snow left. If you and a great many other raindrops do all you can to help, the snow will all be gone soon. Listen !

*Tiny Raindrop* To what ?

*Mother Nature* To that voice. It comes from



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the Earth. It is saying something which will interest you.

*Mayflower* I do wish it would rain. I am so thirsty. I want to grow, and I can't unless the rain will help me.

*Mother Mayflower* I think it will rain soon. That cloud above your head has raindrops in it. They are almost ready to fall.

*Mother Nature* There, did you hear that, Tiny Raindrop?

*Tiny Raindrop* Yes, Mother Nature. But do you think I can be of help to the Mayflower?

*Mother Nature* I know you can be. Hurry quickly down to her and refresh her. You are needed in the world; the Mayflower needs you. Will you go?

*Tiny Raindrop* Yes, yes, I will. I am sorry I was cross. I didn't think I was needed. Come, brothers and sisters, I am ready. Good-by, Mother Nature, good-by!

*Mayflower* Oh, the rain has come!

*Mother Mayflower* Yes, it is raining.

*Mayflower* The brightest baby raindrop has kissed me on the mouth. That kiss has

refreshed me so much. I feel better and will grow and blossom.

*Father Sun* That shower was soon over, but it has done lots of good. Ray Sunbeam !

*Ray Sunbeam* Yes, Father Sun.

*Father Sun* There is a little Mayflower down on the earth that needs you. I want you to go to her quickly.

*Ray Sunbeam* I will go gladly. I am so happy to think some one wants me.

*Father Sun* Little Mayflower needs your warmth and cheer. Tiny Raindrop has refreshed her, and helped her to grow. Now she needs your help.

*Ray Sunbeam* I shall be glad to go to her. I am so small I didn't think I could be of much use to any one.

*Father Sun* Indeed you can be. I shall be busy all day in different places. But you can stay with Mayflower until I call you home. Do her all the good you can.

*Ray Sunbeam* I shall do my best. I shall have such a happy time with Mayflower, I know I shall. It was so good of you, Father Sun, to choose me to go. Good-by !

*Father Sun* Good-by !

*Mayflower* Oh ! Mother ! Mother !

*Mother Mayflower* Yes, dear, I hear you.

*Mayflower* A sunbeam is coming to play with me. I heard Father Sun tell him I needed his help, and he said he would come quickly and give it. Now I shall grow and grow.

*Mother Mayflower* I am very glad, dear. You are a fortunate child. You must do all you can to be beautiful.

*Mayflower* Yes, mother, I will.

*Mother Mayflower* That is the way to return thanks for all that is done for you.

*Mayflower* I am very glad to know what to do. Here is the Sunbeam Father Sun sent. Such good times as we shall have playing together.

## II

TIME: *Forenoon.*

PLACE: *The edge of a wood on a hillside.*

BOY. GIRL. FATHER SUN. RAY SUNBEAM.

MAYFLOWER. MOTHER MAYFLOWER.

*Boy* Do you suppose we shall find one Mayflower ?

*Girl* I wish we might. Mother says it is almost too early, but I hope not.

*Boy* Let us look about everywhere. If there are any Mayflowers, they will be on this hillside. It is so sunny here, and there has been plenty of rain.

*Girl* The Sun is not shining now.

*Boy* No, but I think it will shine soon again. Father said it would not rain to-day.

*Girl* Do you see any flowers?

*Boy* Not yet.

*Girl* Oh, I have found one! As pretty a Mayflower as ever I saw.

*Boy* The first Mayflower.

*Girl* I am so glad! Isn't it a beauty?

*Boy* Yes, it is.

*Girl* Won't mother be pleased?

*Boy* She will indeed. Let us dig it up, plant and all.

*Girl* Oh, that will be nice! We can set it out in our window garden and brother Carl can watch it.

*Boy* Yes, he can. Poor Brother Carl, it is too bad he cannot come to the fields and run about as we do.

*Girl* We will tell him all about the place where this pretty flower grew.

(Sets basket down in which *Mayflower* has been placed.)

*Mother Mayflower* Good-by, dear.

*Mayflower* Good-by, mother. I am sorry to leave you.

*Mother Mayflower* Don't be sorry. This is the way you can do good in the world. I shall miss you, but I shall be glad to think you are making others happy.

*Girl* Shall we go now?

*Boy* Yes; I see no more flowers. There is the Sun! The clouds are being chased away.

(*Girl* and *Boy* go out with the basket containing the *Mayflower*. *Ray Sunbeam* appears and runs quickly to the spot where the *Mayflower* stood.)

*Ray Sunbeam* Where is my pretty playmate? I do not find her. Oh, Father Sun!

*Father Sun* (He is not seen.) Yes, Ray Sunbeam.

*Ray Sunbeam* What has become of my little playmate, *Mayflower*?

*Father Sun* That boy and girl are taking

her home for their little lame brother to watch grow.

*Ray Sunbeam* Oh, Mayflower is going to make somebody happy !

*Father Sun* Yes. It is because you and Tiny Raindrop helped that Mayflower grew so large and beautiful, and was the first Mayflower.

*Ray Sunbeam* I am so glad I helped ! I must find more blossoms to help to grow as I did little friend Mayflower.

*Father Sun* You will find plenty on this hill-side if you make careful search.

*Ray Sunbeam* I see a blossom over yonder!  
It is another Mayflower.

## THE DOLLS' TEA

TIME : *Evening.*

PLACE: *Nursery.*

MARTHA.      BERNICE.      FLORENCE.      WALTER.  
                  SEVERAL DOLLS.

*Martha* Oh, I have the most wonderful thing to tell.

*Bernice* Do tell it quick!



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*Florence* Yes, don't keep us waiting.  
Mother will be calling to go to bed.

*Walter* Is it about the picnic to-morrow?

*Martha* No, it isn't, but if you will keep very still so they won't hear us —

*The Others* Who won't hear us?

*Martha* Shhh! The dolls, — our dolls.

*Bernice* Our dolls? They can't hear anything.

*Florence* No.

*Walter* Of course they can't.

*Martha* Yes they can, and talk too.

*Florence* Oh, we know some of them can say mamma and papa, and the one we wind up can say, "How do you do?"

*Martha* Every doll we own can say a great deal more than that, for I heard them.

*Walter* You were asleep and dreaming when you heard them.

*Martha* I was not asleep or dreaming either. I was in that room when I heard the dolls plan a tea to be given here, in the nursery, to-night.

*Bernice* How very interesting! Which ones planned it?

*Martha* Those two dolls Uncle Wallace brought us from Japan.

*Florence* But, Martha, surely you are mistaken?

*Martha* I am not. I heard what the dolls said. They are going to give a tea here at nine o'clock.

*Bernice* It is almost nine now.

*Walter* Can't we hide and watch them? I want to see what they do.

*Martha* I hadn't thought of watching them. We can do that.

*Florence* Walter, you don't believe the dolls are really going to give a tea?

*Walter* We can find out if they are. Here is a good place to hide, behind the blackboard. I will push it up in the corner. There, the dolls won't come over here, for the tea things are all on the other side of the room.

*Florence* I don't believe they will come at all.

*Martha* Hush!

*Bernice* What is it? Tell me, I want to know!

*Martha* I saw the door move.

*Florence* Mother is coming to send us to bed.

*Martha* No, it isn't mother.

*Bernice* The door is opening. Here come the two Japanese dolls.

*Florence* I never saw the like! They are walking.

*Walter* Don't let them hear us. How pretty they look.

*First Japanese Doll* Did you get word to everybody about the tea?

*Second Japanese Doll* Yes, I even asked the Teddy Bear.

*First Japanese Doll* And he's coming?

*Second Japanese Doll* Yes. De-lighted!

*First Japanese Doll* Will you start the water boiling? The Teddy Bear doesn't drink tea?

*Second Japanese Doll* He told me he didn't know what it tasted like. But he said he was fond of sugar and liked fig cakes.

*First Japanese Doll* Oh, he shall have all the sugar and fig cakes he wants. Now is everything ready?

*Second Japanese Doll* Yes. The tea is just right to pour.

*Miss La France* A very pretty speech.

*Second Japanese Doll* I hope you will enjoy yourself. Do you often go out to tea?

*Miss La France* Oh yes, very often. I have always been accustomed to a great deal of society. I have met a great many Japanese in Paris and (*bowing to Miss Britain*) a great many English too.

*Miss Britain* I think Paris is very pretty.

*Second Japanese Doll* I must say this tea is almost as good as we make in Japan. Mr. Teddy Bear, it seems queer to see you at a tea party! Have you had any tea?

*Teddy Bear* No, no tea for me. These fig cakes and lump sugar are all I ask for.

*Miss Britain* Don't forget some one else may like fig-cakes and sugar quite as well as you do.

*Walter* That was a timely warning.

*Martha* Oh, Walter, why did you speak? I believe the dolls were frightened by your voice. They have stopped talking, and now they are going.

*Bernice* Well, I am glad we can come from behind this blackboard.

*Florence* They really had tea, the teapot is hot, and there is tea left in it.

*Walter* So there is. But Teddy Bear got away with all that sugar and left only one fig cake.

*Martha* What do you think now about dolls talking and acting like real folks when they think no one is spying upon them?

*Florence* It is the most wonderful thing I ever heard of.

*Bernice* Yes, I think so too.

*Walter* So do I. I'm going to get Teddy Bear and find out what he did with all that sugar and those fig cakes. The amount he ate would kill a small boy like me.

## THE TWO CANDLES

### I

TIME: *Early evening.*

PLACE: *A storeroom.*

MISTRESS. LITTLE DAUGHTER. BOY. SERVANT.

WAX CANDLE. TALLOW CANDLE.

*Tallow Candle* You were speaking of what you are, of your birth, and what you expect to do.



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*Wax Candle* As I was born in wax I was molded in a form.

*Tallow Candle* That is a distinction, of course.

*Wax Candle* I give more light and burn a longer time than any other sort of candle. My place is in the chandelier or silver candle-stick.

*Tallow Candle* That must be a charming life.

*Wax Candle* Yes, it is more charming than I can tell you now.

*Tallow Candle* I am only a tallow candle.

*Wax Candle* I know that quite well. You are what is called a tallow dip.

*Tallow Candle* That is all. But I comfort myself, it is always better than to be a mere taper. The taper is dipped only twice. I am dipped eight times to get proper thickness. I am satisfied.

*Wax Candle* We have to be. One doesn't fix himself in this world.

*Tallow Candle* You are right about that.

*Wax Candle* Oh, I am always right.

*Tallow Candle* It would, to be sure, be finer and luckier still to have been born in wax, and not in tallow.



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*Tallow Candle* It would, to be sure, be finer and luckier still to have been born in wax, and not in tallow.

*Wax Candle* Indeed you may well think so, my friend.

*Tallow Candle* Oh, I am satisfied it is so. The wax candles are put in great rooms, and in glass candlesticks. I live in the kitchen.

*Wax Candle* Yes, I know it.

*Tallow Candle* But that is a good place too. They prepare all the dishes in the house there.

*Wax Candle* But there is something that is more important than eating !

*Tallow Candle* I guess I don't quite understand.

*Wax Candle* I mean good company, — to see others shine, and to shine yourself.

*Tallow Candle* That is easy to understand.

*Wax Candle* There is a ball here this evening. Now I and all my family are soon to be sent for.

*Tallow Candle* Yes, of course they will want you all.

*Wax Candle* The Mistress is coming now. What strange boy is that with her ? He looks hungry. And I don't believe he can be very warm, his clothes look so thin.

*Tallow Candle* I declare, his clothes do look thin.

*Mistress* (*Servant follows her, and Little Daughter runs to her.*) Take all the wax lights. We will need every one of them to-night. Yes, I want that tallow candle. This is for you, little boy, to take home with the basket of things the cook is getting ready for you in the kitchen.

(*Servant goes out with Wax Candles.*)

*Little Daughter* The basket is all ready, mother dear. I just now put four apples in it. They are for you and your mother and your sisters, little boy.

*Boy* Thank you ever so much. It is very good of you to think of us.

*Tallow Candle* I like the boy. I wonder if I shall like the mother and sisters?

*Mistress* Your mother sits up and works far into the night; she can use this candle.

*Little Daughter* I am going to sit up till late too! We are giving a ball, and I am to wear big red bows for it.

*Boy* I wish I might see you. I am sure you will look very lovely.

*Mistress* Thank the little boy for what he just said. He gave you a compliment.

*Little Daughter* Thank you very much, little boy. Some time you may see me in my red bows. I must go now and get ready. Good night !

*Boy* Good night ! I thank you for the apples. My mother and sisters thank you too.

*Little Daughter* Oh, I am glad they are to have the apples.

*Tallow Candle* How her face shone ! Yes, that was happiness. No wax light could shine like the child's eyes. That is a blessed thing to see. I shall never forget it. I wonder where I am going ? I am going with the boy of course. I shall be with poor folks. Perhaps not even shall I get a brass candlestick. But the wax light is stuck in silver, and sees the finest folks ! What can be more delightful than to be a light among fine folks ? It is my lot, however, to be tallow, not wax.

## II

TIME: *Evening.*

PLACE: *A room that is rather bare.*

MOTHER. Two GIRLS. BOY. TALLOW CANDLE.

*Mother* God bless the lady for what she gave ! The food is most welcome. It is a splendid candle she sent me,— it will burn far into the night.

*First Girl* I will get a match and light it for you, mother.

*Tallow Candle* Pugh ! That was a horrid match she lighted me with. They wouldn't use such a thing as that over at the big house.

*First Girl* What a great light the candle gives !

*Boy* Yes, doesn't it ? Here comes little sister. See, sister, the candle ! Doesn't it make a great light ?

*Second Girl* Yes, it makes a lovely light. But I know something !

*Tallow Candle* The child has a secret. I wonder if she will tell it ? What is that I hear ? Oh, the carriages driving to the great house ! The wax lights are burning over there now.

But Little Daughter's face is brighter, I am sure, than all the wax lights. I never shall see her any more.

*Second Girl* Who wants to know my secret?

*First Girl* Is it a real secret.

*Second Girl* Yes. Oh, you will know sometime!

*Boy* Why not tell us now?

*Second Girl* I will. What do you think we are going to have for supper?

*First Girl and Boy* We don't know.

*Second Girl* Hot potatoes!

*First Girl and Boy* Oh!

*Tallow Candle* I declare, these children are as happy to know they will have hot potatoes for supper, as Little Daughter was when she found she would see the ball this evening and wear great red bows.

*Boy* Won't it be nice to have hot potatoes? The kind lady at the big house gave them to us.

*Second Girl* Oh, did she? I wish there was something we could give her that she would like.

*Tallow Candle* I think if Mistress knew how

happy she has made these children, she would say that was gift enough.

*First Girl* Come, let us set the table ! You cut the bread, sister.

*Boy* These apples Little Daughter at the big house gave us.

*Second Girl* Who ever saw prettier apples ?

*Boy* I am certain they will taste as good as they look.

*Tallow Candle* Everything these children have is best. I am not one bit sorry that Mistress gave me to the people here. They all have good hearts.

*First Girl* Mother is coming with the potatoes !

*Second Girl* She has cooked two apiece.

*Boy* Won't we have a fine supper ?

*Mother* Yes, we will, my son.

*First Girl* Everything is so good !

*Mother* Yes, very good.

*Second Girl* I don't know whether I can eat my apple.

*Mother* I guess you can.

*Second Girl* I am going to try.

*First Girl* My apple is eaten.

*Boy* So is mine.

*Mother* Are we all of us through?

*Second Daughter* Just a moment. There, my apple is gone.

*Mother* Now, daughter dear, say thanks for us.

*Second Girl*

“Now thanks, dear Lord, I give to Thee,  
That Thou again hast fillèd me. Amen.”  
Was not that said prettily?

*Mother* You must not ask that or say it. You should only thank the good God, who has filled you. Now, children, it is time for you to go to bed. Here is a good-night kiss for each of you.

*First Girl* Must you sew to night, mother?

*Mother* Yes, dear. Good night.

*First Girl* Good night.

*Second Girl* Good night.

*Boy* You will have a good light to sew by, mother dear.

*Mother* Yes, my son, thanks once more to the kind lady at the big house. Good night.

*Boy* Good night, mother.

*Mother* The darlings! They are every one

of them tired. I am so glad they have had a good supper. They will sleep soundly. I shall get lots of work done, helped by this splendid light.

*Tallow Candle* What a rare evening I have spent. I can't think the wax lights had any better time in their silver candlesticks. I would like to know if they did before I am burned out. This I have learned, however, money is not real wealth. It is happiness that makes us rich. There is vastly more money at the big house than here, but no greater riches or happiness. But at the big house they have learned to share their riches. The things the Mistress gave have made this mother and her dear children very happy.

— HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN (*Adapted*).

## THOUGHTLESS ROBERT

TIME: *Morning.*

PLACE: *Just inside the great barn doors.*

FARMER. ROBERT. GRAY COLT. RANGER. TABBY.  
TOMMY. MUFFET. GOBBLER. WHITE GOOSE.  
THREE GEESE. OLD DRAKE. THREE DUCKS. CALF.

*Gray Colt (Appears in doorway of barn.)*  
Here I am quite alone. The hens that are not laying eggs are down in the orchard. The ducks and geese have gone to the pond. The cows and sheep are in the pasture, and the horse is in a field far away plowing. Oh, I have forgotten Tabby and her two kittens that are in the loft above me.

*Ranger (He is coming through the yard.)*  
Bow-wow-wow ! Bow-wow ! Bow-wow !

*Gray Colt* Here comes Ranger. How do you do, Ranger ?

*Ranger* How do you do, Gray Colt ? Tell me, who left you untied ?

*Gray Colt* Robert did.

*Ranger* Robert is a careless fellow. He has left the farmyard gate open.

*Gray Colt* Really ? How careless he is.

*Ranger* He is indeed.

*Tabby* Meow ! Meow ! Stay where you are, children, I am going downstairs. Well, come with me if you want to. How do you do, Ranger ?

*Ranger* I am very well, Mistress Tabby, Pray, how are you ?

*Tabby* Oh, I am very well. How are you this morning, Gray Colt ?

*Gray Colt* I am all right.

*Tabby* I see you are untied.

*Gray Colt* Robert left me untied.

*Tabby* How careless Robert is.

*Ranger* Just what I have been saying. Your children are growing.

*Tabby* Growing ! I should think they were growing. Stand up, Tommy ! Muffet, stand up too. There, what do you think ?

*Ranger* Remarkable. They are children to be proud of, Mistress Tabby.

*Tabby* I am proud of them. Bow, children ; bow ! That will do.

*Ranger* You are very polite children.

*Tommy* How nice of him to call us polite ?

*Muffet* Yes, very nice.

*Gobbler* Gobble ! Gobble ! Gobble !

*Gray Colt* Is Gobbler coming here ?

*Ranger* I think so.

*Gobbler* (*He comes into barn.*) Gobble !

Gobble ! Gobble ! Do you know what that boy, Robert, has done ?

*Ranger* Left the farmyard gate open.

*Gobbler* Yes, left the farmyard gate open.

*Ranger* I just told Gray Colt so.

*Gobbler* But did you know that Old Chick and all her little chicks are out in the road ?

*Ranger* No, I did not know that. Oh, that boy, that boy !

*White Goose* (*She is running across the yard followed by three other geese.*) Honk ! Honk ! Honk ! S-s-s-s-s ! Hurry, friends.

*Ranger* Where are you going, White Goose ?

*White Goose* Out into the world. The farmyard gate is open. Come along, friends.

*Three Geese* (*They follow White Goose out of the yard.*) Honk ! Honk ! Honk ! S-s-s-s-s-s !

*Old Drake* (*He comes up to the barn with three ducks.*) Quack ! Quack ! Quack ! Hurry, my dears. Oh, friends, what do you think ? That boy, Robert, has left the

farmyard gate open ! Everybody is going out. Make haste, my dears. This is the first chance we have had to see anything of the world.

*Three Ducks* Yes, and we must make the most of it.

*Ranger* Go back to your pond where you belong.

*Old Drake* Thank you, we are going to try the river.

*Ranger* There they go. A fine lot of trouble that boy will have made by his carelessness.

*Calf* (*He is coming toward the barn.*) Ma ! Ma !

*Tabby* What can Calf want ?

*Gray Colt* Who can say ? Hello, Calf ! What are you up to ?

*Calf* Don't you know the farmyard gate is open ? Robert left it open.

*Ranger* Yes. But where are you going ? The farmer tied you in the orchard this morning.

*Calf* I pulled my head through the rope. Now I am going to see what the world is like outside the farmyard gate.

*Ranger* Bow-wow-wow ! Bow-wow !

*Tabby* You can't stop him, Ranger, no use to try. See him run and kick up his heels.

*Gray Colt* Hurrah ! Hurrah ! Hurrah !

*Ranger* What are you saying ?

*Gray Colt* Something Robert says when he feels good. Hurrah ! Hurrah ! Hurrah !

*Ranger* Yes, but where are you going ?

*Gray Colt* I am going to see what the rest of the world looks like.

*Ranger* Come back ! Come back ! You will lose yourself or be killed.

*Gray Colt* Don't worry about me, Ranger. Hurrah ! Hurrah ! Hurrah ! I am off to see the world.

*Ranger* I must find a way to get all these foolish creatures back.

*Tabby* That won't be an easy thing to do, Ranger. Come, children, we will go to the loft again.

*Ranger* Why doesn't Robert learn not to be careless ? Bow-wow-wow ! Bow-wow-wow ! Bow-wow-wow ! Here comes the farmer, my master. Bow-wow-wow !

*Farmer* Ranger ! Ranger ! What is the matter ?

*Ranger* Bow-wow-wow !      Bow-wow-wow !

*Farmer* What is it, Ranger ? Oh, I see ;  
the farmyard gate has been left open.

*Ranger* Bow-wow-wow !

*Farmer* Where is Robert ? Where can that  
boy be ? Robert ! Robert !

*Robert* Coming, sir. What is it, father.

*Farmer* Look at the farmyard gate.

*Robert* Why, it is open, and the calf, the  
ducks, the geese, and the colt are running  
away.

*Farmer* Yes, they are running away. But  
who left the gate open ?

*Robert* Father, I did. I was in a hurry  
and did not think.

*Farmer* There are two things, my son, that  
you must learn to do. You must make haste  
slowly, and you must give thought to what  
you are doing.

*Robert* Yes, sir, I will try. I am very sorry.  
Shall I go now and catch the colt ?

*Farmer* Yes, and Ranger and I will bring  
the other runaways home. Come, Ranger !

*Ranger* Bow-wow-wow !      Bow-wow-wow !  
Bow-wow-wow !

## WHAT HAPPENED AROUND THE CHRISTMAS TREE

TIME: *Just after midnight.*

PLACE: *By the Christmas tree.*

FRENCH DOLL. CHINA DOLL. SAILOR DOLL. INDIAN DOLL. SOLDIER DOLL. PRINCESS DOLL. PRINCE DOLL. BEAR DOLL. CLOTH RABBIT. WOOLLY DOG. JACK-IN-THE-BOX. MUSIC BOX. MATCH. SANTA CLAUS.

*Princess Doll* Dear me! How dreadfully dull it is. I don't like being left standing here all night.

*Prince Doll* I agree with you. It is the most tiresome thing I ever undertook to do.

*Soldier Doll* Why don't we do something different?

*Princess Doll* What can we do different? Anything would be better than doing absolutely nothing.

*French Doll* Some one might let me out of this box.

*Prince Doll* I will.

*Princess Doll* You poor thing! Aren't you almost dead?

*French Doll* I think another hour of it would have been all I could have stood.



*Bear Doll* Isn't she pretty ?

*Cloth Rabbit* Rather ; but I like the Princess's looks best.

*Bear Doll* Yes, she is good looking.

*Jack-in-the-box* Hi ! Hi ! Hear ! Hear !  
Are you all deaf ?

*Sailor Doll* (*He lets Jack-in-the-box out.*)  
We will be if you keep up that racket long.

*Jack-in-the-box* Thank you for giving me a chance to stretch myself.

*Sailor Doll* My eye ! Your neck goes out like a giraffe's. What a funny fellow you are.

*Jack-in-the-box* Please don't make me the entire subject of your conversation. But you can depend upon it, I am always good for a laugh whenever I appear.

*Sailor Doll* I should think you might be.

*Princess Doll* Are we just going to talk ? Aren't we going to do anything else ?

*Indian Doll* I'll dance for you.

*Prince Doll* Dance ! Oh, my dear fellow, what can you know about dancing ?

*Indian Doll* Watch me and you shall see.

*Cloth Rabbit* He knows a lot about dancing.

*Bear Doll* To be sure he does. He knows some of the dances I know.

(*Indian Doll dances in wild fashion.*)

*French Doll* (As *Indian* stops dancing.) How droll.

*Princess Doll* Not very graceful, but I am glad some one has had the courage to begin.

*Bear Doll* I dance, you know.

*Princess Doll* I didn't know it. Show us what you can do, please. (*Bear Doll dances clumsily and crudely.*)

*Woolly Dog* Bow-wow-wow ! Bow-wow !

*Soldier Doll* It's all right to bark, Woolly Dog. I never saw dancing that was more absurd.

*Jack-in-the-box* I actually believe he is funnier than I am.

*Princess Doll* Now who can do something else ? We are really beginning to be quite gay and sociable.

*Match* How would it do if I lit a few of the candles on the tree ?

*Several* Yes, do ! The very thing we want done.

*Prince Doll* That's much better. The fire wasn't giving enough light. Thank you,

Match. Why, poor fellow ! there's hardly anything left of him.

*Several* Oh, that's too bad ! It was so good of him to think of lighting up for us.

*China Doll* Won't somebody sing ?

*Indian Doll* I can —

*Soldier Doll* You have danced. I am sure the Princess sings.

*China Doll* Yes, she does, I have heard her.

*Several* Sing for us, Princess.

*Princess Doll* (Sings.)

A little brook ran down a hill,

It ran, and ran, and ran.

“Come,” said the brook unto a child,

“You catch me if you can.”

The child called back, “I’ll catch you yet !”

His running days are o’er.

But still the brook goes on his way

As happy as before.

*Soldier Doll* Well sung ! Can’t we have more singing ? Cloth Rabbit ?

*Cloth Rabbit* None of my family sing.

*Soldier Doll* Woolly Dog ?

*Jack-in-the-box* We have heard from him already.

*Bear Doll* He has been known to sing.

*Jack-in-the-box* Don't urge him. If you do, and he consents, shut me up again.

*Soldier Doll* I won't urge the dog to sing.

*Princess Doll* You sing yourself, don't you?

*Soldier Doll* I have sung a little. But my sailor friend here dances exceedingly well. Let him dance, then I will sing.

*Sailor Doll* I would like some one to dance with me. (*To Indian who runs up.*) Not you. The China Doll, if she will?

*China Doll* Oh, I never dance!

*Sailor Doll* Then the French Doll.

*French Doll* Yes, I will dance with you. (*A simple, pretty dance is done by these two.*)

*Indian Doll* They do dance very well. But—

*Prince Doll* There won't be time for you to dance again to-night.

*Princess Doll* Won't you sing for us now, *Soldier Doll*?

*Soldier Doll* (*Sings as one quite proud of himself.*)

The trumpet's call I quickly heed,  
I leap to place upon my steed,  
My trusty blade I bare.

I do not stop to count the foe;  
Into the battle's press I go,  
    Nor fear my part to share.

The call may come by night or day,  
A thousand dangers crowd the way,  
    Still I my part will do.  
Go forward at my Captain's word,  
Be ready when his voice is heard,  
    To all that's good be true.

*Prince Doll* Quite a proper song for a soldier.  
Now isn't there something we can do together?

*Indian Doll* Sing.

*Princess Doll* That leaves out Rabbit and  
Woolly Dog.

*Jack-in-the-box* Dance, why don't you? I  
can't, but I'll direct; you know, the way the  
leader of an orchestra does.

*Music Box* I'll play for you. I have a very  
good tune to dance by.

*China Doll* I think you will have to excuse me.

*Princess Doll* You dance? Of course you do.

*China Doll* Oh, scarcely at all.

*Princess Doll* Come, you are going to dance  
now. All ready, Music Box.

(*Music Box plays, Jack-in-the-box directing.*  
*The tune grows livelier. The dancers*  
*circle about the tree. Indian Doll*  
*becomes quite excited. Others call out vari-*  
*ously. Suddenly sleigh bells are heard*  
*outside. They stop ringing and Santa*  
*Claus runs in, the dancing being most*  
*exciting. He watches the dancers for a*  
*second, then he is discovered. Music*  
*Box stops playing. Jack-in-the-box di-*  
*rects for a moment longer.*)

*Santa Claus* What is the meaning of this ?  
Don't you know the hour ? The children will  
be coming soon. Here, *Jack-in-the-box*, I'll  
shut you up. Now the rest of you get to  
your places. Candles burning ! These must  
be put out. There, that is more the way  
things should look about a Christmas tree  
on Christmas morning. Don't forget what  
you are here for : to help make Christmas and  
all the year merry. You have had a good time  
amongst yourselves, try to make a happy time  
for others. Good-by ! A merry Christmas !

*The Toys* (*Santa Claus is running out.*)  
Merry Christmas !

## THE LOST AX

TIME: *Forenoon.*

PLACE: *In a wood by the side of a river.*

FIRST WOODMAN. WIFE. SECOND WOODMAN. FAIRY.  
RABBIT. SPARROW. WOODPECKER. KINGFISHER.

*First Woodman* My ax! My ax! Oh what shall I do, my ax has fallen into the river, and the water is so deep I cannot see to the bottom.

*Woodpecker* (*Comes from behind a tree.*)  
What has happened?

*Kingfisher* The man has lost his ax.  
*Woodpecker* Hasn't he another?  
*Kingfisher* Probably not, he is trying so hard to find this one.

*Woodpecker* Can you see it?  
*Kingfisher* Yes.  
*Woodpecker* Couldn't you get it for him?  
*Kingfisher* (*Sparrow and Rabbit come in.*)

It is too heavy for me to lift.

*Sparrow* What is the matter?  
*Kingfisher* The man has dropped his ax in the water and can't get it.



*Rabbit* I will go and tell the fairy of this wood about the man and his ax. She, I am sure, will come and help him.

*Woodpecker* Yes, Rabbit, go and tell her. Say we know the man, that he has always been kind to every living creature in the forest.

*Rabbit* I will tell her all these things. (*As he leaps away.*) Look for me back in a minute with the Fairy.

*Kingfisher* I hadn't thought about the Fairy. Of course she will help the man.

*Sparrow* Here she comes. Let us join Rabbit. He has stopped by that tree.

*Fairy* What have you lost, sir?

*First Woodman* (*Stands erect and looks surprised at Fairy.*) My ax. By its use I earned bread for wife and children. I can hardly afford a new ax at this time.

*Fairy* Dry your eyes. Now show me the spot where the ax fell into the water.

*First Woodman* Here it is. It slipped from my hand just as I had lifted it to strike this tree.

*Fairy* I will get your ax for you.

*First Woodman* You! (*Fairy drops into river.*)

She has gone ! She is out of sight ! Here she comes, an ax in her hand.

*Fairy* (*Steps out of the water.*) Is this your ax ?

*First Woodman* No, this ax is of gold. Mine was not at all like it.

*Fairy* You are sure ?

*First Woodman* Yes, yes, very sure.

*Fairy* I will leave the ax here and go down again. (*She drops into the water out of sight.*)

*First Woodman* This is not my ax she is bringing up.

*Rabbit* He is an honest fellow.

*Woodpecker* More honest than I had thought him to be.

*Kingfisher* Do you see what the Fairy has brought this time ?

*Sparrow* Oh, an ax of silver !

*Fairy* Is this the ax you lost, Woodman ?

*First Woodman* Oh, no ! I never owned an ax of this sort. Besides, I could not cut anything with it.

*Fairy* Very well, I will leave this with the other, and try once more to find your ax.

(*Drops out of sight again.*)

*Kingfisher* What sort of an ax will the Fairy bring up this time I wonder?

*Sparrow* I think it will be the Woodman's own ax.

*Woodpecker* You are right, Sparrow, for, see, she has it in her hand.

*Fairy* Is this your lost ax?

*First Woodman* Yes, yes! Thank you for bringing it to me. Now I can go to work again.

*Fairy* Woodman.

*First Woodman* Yes.

*Fairy* Why do you leave these axes?

*First Woodman* They are not mine.

*Fairy* I give them to you, a reward for your honesty. Show them to your wife. She is coming now. Do not work any more to-day. Go home with your wife and take your axes with you. Then buy her a new gown and take her to the fair.

(*Fairy goes away.*)

*Rabbit* The Fairy was kind to the Woodman.

*Woodpecker* He was deserving of her kindness.

*Rabbit* Let's leave the Woodman to meet his wife alone.

(*Hops out. The birds fly away.*) .

*Wife* (*Runs to First Woodman.*) You were coming home to dinner ! Why have you delayed ?

*First Woodman* I lost my ax in the river.

*Wife* Oh, that is too bad ! We have no money to buy another.

*First Woodman* Do not cry, wife.

*Wife* Not cry ! Why —

*First Woodman* I have my ax.

*Wife* Oh, you got it out of the river ?

*First Woodman* No, but the Fairy of the wood did. And she brought me this and this.

*Wife* Gold ! Silver ! Did — did the Fairy give them to you ?

*First Woodman* Yes.

*Wife* If we sold them we would be rich.

*First Woodman* We are to have a holiday. I shall buy you a new gown and take you to the fair.

*Wife* I shall be glad to have a new gown, and it will be nice to go to the fair. But tell me all about the Fairy and the axes.

*First Woodman* As we walk home I will tell you. It is a long story.

(*They go out together very happy.*)

*Kingfisher* (*Flies back to bank of river. Rabbit hops in and stops to nibble some tender leaves.*) I will see if I can't catch a fish now every one has gone.

*Rabbit* We shan't have the place to ourselves long. Our friend, the Woodman, is bound to show the gold and silver axes. His wife's busy tongue will soon spread the story.

*Kingfisher* Hark ! Some one is running this way. Already the story is known.

(*Sparrow and Woodpecker fly in haste to Kingfisher and Rabbit.*)

*Sparrow* The news is spreading everywhere of how the Woodman came by his axes of gold and silver.

*Woodpecker* Soon there will be scores of men dropping axes into the river.

*Rabbit* No doubt. Let's get out of the way of this fellow, but remain near enough to hear and watch him.

(*They part as Second Woodman runs into view panting for breath.*)

*Second Woodman* This is the place ! Yes, it must be. It is all quite as he described it. Here is the river. There ! Go to the bottom, ax, and turn quickly to gold. Oh ! Oh ! Oh ! My ax, my ax ; my precious ax. I have dropped it into the river. How shall I get it again ? The water is very deep ; too deep for me to dive to the bottom. Oh, without my ax I must starve ! Where is the Fairy, why doesn't she come ? Perhaps I have not cried loud enough. I will make her hear. Oh ! Oh ! Oh ! Oh ! Oh ! Oh !

*Sparrow* He bellows like an ox that is hurt.

*Rabbit* I never heard such a noise in all my life.

*Woodpecker* I have a mind to go for the Fairy. He will stop when he sees her.

*Kingfisher* Here she comes. This is a dishonest fellow, I fear.

*Rabbit* If that's what he is, the Fairy will soon know all about it.

*Fairy* My good man, why do you weep and call so loudly ? You can be heard all over the wood.

*Second Woodman* Oh ! Oooooo-oh !

*Fairy* Now you are quiet, tell me what is the matter.

*Second Woodman* I have lost my ax. It fell from my hands into the river. It was a most beautiful ax. Wondrous sharp it was too. I could do more work with it in a day than any other cutter in the forest.

*Woodpecker* The fellow is a boaster.

*Rabbit* I doubt if his ax had any edge on it.

*Fairy* Have you tried to get the ax?

*Second Woodman* Do you know how deep the water is here, and how strong the current that flows beneath the surface?

*Fairy* I know something of these things. But surely you must have tried to recover your ax?

*Second Woodman* It would have been no use my trying.

*Fairy* I will see what I can do for you. This is the right spot? You are quite sure?

*Second Woodman* Yes, yes! Ah! There she goes. She is entirely lost to sight now.

*Rabbit* You can see her, can't you?

*Kingfisher* Easily.

*Sparrow* Is she coming up?

*Kingfisher* Yes, and she is bringing an ax of gold.

*Woodpecker* Look at the greedy fellow.

*Rabbit* Watch him closely.

*Fairy* Is this the ax you lost?

*Second Woodman* It is, truly!

*Fairy* (*Holds ax just out of Woodman's reach.*) But this ax will not cut.

*Second Woodman* Oh, you do not know the ax.

*Fairy* Perhaps I do, better than you think.

*Second Woodman* Let me but have it in my hands and I will show you what it can do.

*Fairy* You shall not have the ax. I will keep it. It was never yours, and never will be. If you want your own ax again, go after it. That is the only way it will be restored to you. (*Goes away.*)

*Second Woodman* I have no ax now. I am most unlucky.

*Rabbit* Doesn't he know he deserves to be?

*Woodpecker* He is finding it out.

*Sparrow* If he hadn't been greedy.

*Kingfisher* That is why he has lost everything.

*Second Woodman* (*Goes away sadly.*) I can see where my mistake was made. If Fortune ever comes my way again, she won't find me at fault.

*Rabbit* (*Woodman goes from view.*) She is pretty certain to doubt you always after this.

— *ÆSOP (Adapted).*

## PRINCE DARLING

### I

TIME: *Afternoon.*

PLACE: *A Wood.*

KING.

RABBIT.

*King* This is a pleasant wood, I wonder that anything ever goes wrong here. What was that? Why, Rabbit! There, be quiet; you are safe in my arms. How your heart beats, as if it might break. What has happened to make you tremble so?

*Rabbit* Oh, King, the dogs of the hunters are chasing me. Can't you hear them?

*King* I hear them, gentle Rabbit. But

calm your fears, little creature, I will keep you from all harm.

*Rabbit* Oh, King, you are so good ! Where are you taking me ?

*King* I am taking you to my palace. Yonder it is.

*Rabbit* How beautiful ! I shall be safe there.

*King* Yes, the hunters and their dogs cannot get you then.

*Rabbit* Thank you, mighty King.

*King* Here is a red apple for you. My people shall build you a house where no dog can find you.

*Rabbit* Thank you ever so much, dear king. You are the kindest king in the world.

## II

TIME: *Evening.*

PLACE: *A room in the palace.*

KING.

ATTENDANT.

FAIRY TRUTH.

*King* Is my little Rabbit safe in his new house ?

*Attendant* Yes, my king. He went into it as the sun was going down, and I heard him close the door.

*King* That is well. No harm must come to my little Rabbit. (*Fairy Truth appears suddenly.*) Who are you, beautiful one?

*Fairy Truth* Good, kind King, it was I whom you sheltered to-day in the form of a rabbit. One so kind to helpless creatures must be a wise ruler and good to his people. What gift do you desire?

*King* Nothing for myself. But I have a son whom I desire should grow to be a happy man.

*Fairy Truth* Very well. Shall I make him rich?

*King* Oh, no! Riches do not bring happiness.

*Fairy Truth* Very well. Shall I make him beautiful?

*King* Oh, no! He may be beautiful and yet be unhappy.

*Fairy Truth* What can I give, then?

*King* Make him good; then will he be happy and all about him will be happy too.

*Fairy Truth* Ah, me! You are right, but only the Prince himself can do that. I will help him all I can. I will give him a magic



ring. Whenever he does anything wrong, the ring will prick his finger. If he heeds its pricking and stops his wrong-doing, all will be well. If he does not heed it, he will soon become unable to feel its warning. If he should do very wrong, I myself must give some severe punishment. I will go now and give the ring to your son.

### III

TIME: *Evening.*

PLACE: *Palace courtyard.*

PRINCE.

COMPANIONS OF PRINCE.

*A Companion* You are a fool for heeding the ring. Your father is dead. You are king and all powerful.

*Other Companions* Yes, yes, you are all powerful, throw away the ring.

*Prince* I shall not throw the ring away, it is very beautiful.

*Companions* It is beautiful.

*Prince* But it shall not interfere; I will do as I please!

## IV

TIME: *Morning.*PLACE: *A street.*TWO MEN. THREE WOMEN. MAIDEN. PRINCE.  
HUNTERS. FAIRY TRUTH.

*First Man* How very wicked our king has grown to be ?

*Second Man* Very wicked indeed.

*First Woman* He has become so bad that nobody loves him.

*Second Woman* Yes, he is so bad that the dogs run from him ; they fear his heavy boot and harsh whip.

*Third Woman* I see him coming this way. Let us run home or he may harm us.

(*The men and women run away. The Prince appears quickly. From another direction comes a Maiden picking flowers.*)

*Prince* Why do those fools run ? (Sees Maiden.) What will you do with those flowers ?

*Maiden* I shall take them home.

*Prince* You are very pretty. I will marry you !

*Maiden* Oh, no ! even though you are a

king I cannot marry you, for you are a wicked man.

*Prince* Not marry me? We shall see. I shall take you to a cold, dark room in my palace if you won't marry me, and you shall starve to death. (*Fairy Truth appears suddenly.*) What brings you here, Fairy Truth?

*Fairy Truth* I am come because you have forgotten the good ways of the kind king, your father, and have loved evil companions, and have lived as the beasts live. You shall take the form of a beast to show how wicked your heart has become, and through bitterness and suffering only shall the kingdom become yours. Go, now, and come back to me in the form of a wild boar. (*Prince runs away.* *Immediately he is heard snorting, screaming and grunting with rage.*) Come with me, Maiden, you shall not see the Prince as he is now.

(*Fairy Truth and Maiden go away.*)

*A Hunter* Do not kill him, we will take him to the king alive.

(*Hunters bring in Prince, now turned into a boar.*)

*Second Hunter* He is a fine boar. So very large.

*First Hunter* Yes, but very ugly. We must tie him fast.

*Third Hunter* Here is a piece of rope. It is good and strong.

*First Hunter* It is just the thing. Come, all must help. He is a savage beast. There, he can harm no one now.

*Second Hunter* Shall we take him to the palace?

*First Hunter* Yes, we will go away at once.

## V

TIME: *Afternoon.*

PLACE: *Near palace gate.*

TEACHER. PRINCE. HUNTERS. SEVERAL PEOPLE.

*Third Hunter* The way to the palace has seemed long.

*First Hunter* Because our burden is a heavy one.

*Fourth Hunter* Hark! What do the people cry out?

*People* (*About the palace gate.*) The King is dead!

*Hunters* The King is dead?

*People* Long live the King !

*Hunters* Long live the King !

*First Hunter* Let us go to the new King and offer him our boar.

*Second Hunter* Shall we leave the beast here ?

*First Hunter* Yes, he is tied too fast to get away.

(*The hunters go away.*)

*Prince* Alas ! Is it not enough to rob me of my crown ? They will have the robber feast upon me. Who is that speaking ? It is the robber king himself. No, it is my old teacher ! What is he saying ?

*Teacher* (*Appears. People and hunters gather about him.*) I will wear this crown that I may keep the kingdom for its rightful prince. He will one day find himself and come back to his people again.

*Prince* I am sorry that I forgot the good ways of the kind king, my father, and have loved evil companions. If my good old teacher will spare me and let me live, I shall try to shun all evil. The hunters are coming for me. I shall not make any noise. Let them do with me what they will.

*First Hunter (The King and people march away.) The King said we should give this brute to a keeper.*

*(Hunters pick up Prince and carry him after the King and people.)*

## VI

TIME: *Morning.*

PLACE: *The animal pits.*

PRINCE. KEEPER. FAIRY TRUTH. QUEEN.

*Prince* What is that dreadful noise? The tiger has broken his chain; he will kill my keeper. Let him do it; it will serve the man right; he is a cruel fellow. He has beaten me until I am sore all over, and he never gives me half food enough. No, I will return good for evil. Perhaps I can save the keeper's life.

*(Runs out. Returns in a moment with Keeper, who limps badly.)*

*Keeper* I do not understand this. When the tiger had me down and would have killed me, you were an ugly, savage boar. You killed the tiger and now you are a beautiful white dog, and look as if you might be trusted.

*Prince* I wish I could make this fellow understand how glad I am to be a dog.

*Fairy Truth* (*Appears and speaks in Prince's ear.*) A good action is always rewarded. The Queen comes this way. She will be pleased with you. Try to serve her well.

*Queen* What a beautiful dog. I am sure he is as good as he is beautiful. You shall come with me. I will feed you myself. You shall have bread and meat to eat.

*Prince* Will she know that I thank her for this kindness?

*Queen* Good fellow, you want me to know how glad you feel. Come, you are to go with me.

## VII

TIME: *Noonday.*

PLACE: *Near a great tree.*

PRINCE. SEVERAL PEOPLE. FAIRY TRUTH.

*Prince* I will eat my loaf of bread under this tree. Why, how hungry these people look. Look at this poor girl. She is pale and faint. She may be dying of hunger. I will give her

my bread. Oh, you are hungry, poor girl. I am glad I knew what you wanted. Why, you are sharing your bread with many others ? How happy it has made you to do this thing. It makes one happy to help others.

*Fairy Truth* (*Appears suddenly.*) Oh, Prince, you are learning those things that will some day fit you to be king again. Go from here now. When you come to the edge of the forest, you will find yourself no longer a dog, but a white dove.

*Prince* Are good deeds always rewarded ?

*Fairy Truth* Always, Prince. Go now.

## VIII

TIME : *Evening.*

PLACE : *A room.*

CELIA. FATHER. FAIRY TRUTH. PRINCE.

(*Celia and Father are seated at table. She is waiting upon him. Prince, as Dove, is seen at window.*)

*Celia* See the beautiful dove, father, at our window.

*Father* I see him, daughter.

*Prince* How handsome she is. I wish that I might be loved by her.

*Celia* Father, I want the dove for my own. I would love it always.

*Father* Take care! Do you know what you are saying?

*Celia* Yes, that if the dove were mine I would love it always.

(*Fairy Truth* comes into room with *Prince* in his true person.)

*Father* Look, daughter.

*Celia* Oh, the Prince!

*Prince* Yes, Celia, the Prince, the King. I want you to go with me and be my queen.

*Fairy Truth* She will go. Take her to the palace and receive your kingdom from your teacher. But remember to obey the promptings of the ring always.

— *Adapted.*











